

**“DEVELOPING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH
INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING:
AN INTERPRETIVE CASE STUDY”**

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to the required standards

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Certification of Thesis Work

We, the undersigned, certify that Sherilyn Acorn-LeClair, candidate for the degree of Master of Education has presented her thesis with the following title: *Developing Global Citizenship in Higher Education through Internatinoal Experiential Learning: An Interpretive Case Study*, that the thesis is acceptable in form and content, and that a satisfactory knowledge of the field covered by the thesis was demonstrated by the candidate through an oral examination held on June 27th, 2014.

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Abstract

This case study investigates the correlation between international experiential learning and the development of global citizenship characteristics through understanding the lived experiences of 10 University of Prince Edward Island students who took part in two different forms of international experiential learning (IEL) programs. A review of the literature around international education, international experiential learning, global citizenship, and internationalization within higher education is presented. A small demographic survey, pre-departure and re-entry focus groups, and reflective journaling were used to collect data about participant experience. Several questions were addressed: What does global citizenship mean for participants? What are participants' lived experiences during the international experiential learning process? What practices and strategies adopted by the international experiential learning programs facilitate students' development as global citizens? This research will determine whether or not students understand global citizenship. It will also serve as a vehicle to understand and explore whether or not there is a connection between IEL and the development of global citizenship characteristics. In total, 10 students took part in the study. The findings reveal students' understanding of global citizenship and suggest that a global citizenship objective has to be explicit and woven into international experiential learning programs in order to help students in higher education become responsible global citizens. Mandatory reflection, more IEL opportunities, and the incorporation of IEL into curriculum are just a few of the recommendations put forth to better support and promote the development of global citizens in today's globalized age.

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Dedication

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Chapter I: Introduction

Learning is experience. Everything else is just information.

~Albert Einstein~

For more than seven years, I have had the pleasure of sending students all over the world for an experience they will never forget. During this time I often wondered how they were transforming from these adventures. This curiosity led to the development of this study where I explore the experiences of 10 students to determine whether or not they develop the characteristics of global citizens through international experiential learning. This first chapter will discuss my research autobiography, rationale, context, purpose, and objectives of this study.

Research Autobiography

Schattle (2009) describes a global educator as someone who “strives to render their students competitive in the international economy, while also instilling awareness and empathy of other countries, cultures, and issues of common concern across the planet” (p. 6). He also goes on to explain that, “although many internationally engaged educators would not necessarily regard themselves as global citizens, they often aspire for the young people whose lives they touch to fit this description” (p. 6). This describes me. As an internationally engaged educator in higher education, I don't always view myself as a global citizen, but I want the students that I work with on a daily basis to develop global citizenship characteristics.

I was born in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. After graduating from Bluefield High School in 1993, I spent the next seven years working two jobs and traveling. I visited islands in the Caribbean and many countries throughout Europe. Eventually, I realized it was

time to continue with my education. This was a very difficult decision given the travel bug that was instilled within me from my previous adventures.

In 2000, I enrolled in the Bachelor of Business Administration and Cooperative Education at the University of Prince Edward Island. During my time in university, I completed my required co-operative education work terms in both local and international settings, including Ottawa, Ontario, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island and Auckland, New Zealand. During my time in Auckland, I spent several months working for the Canadian Consulate. This was the first stepping stone for my career in International Education. My time in New Zealand led me to experience and explore different cultures and really start to understand my own culture. One of the main components of my job at the Canadian Consulate was helping to connect the Canadian business community with the New Zealand business community and help to open doors for importing and exporting between the two nations.

Upon graduating in 2005, I worked with a local software company that conducted 90% of their business outside of Canada. This enticed me to complete a Diploma in International Trade which led to my designation as a Certified International Trade Professional (CITP). In 2006, I began to work as the Coordinator of International Business Program in the School of Business at UPEI. The overall objective of this position was to aid in the development of students' global competency while facilitating the logistics of student exchange and international internships for the School of Business. During my time in this position, I was also a member of the UPEI Internationalization Committee. The mandate of this committee was to internationalize the campus through curriculum internationalization, international partnership development and international experiential learning. Being involved in this and several other committees led to my deepened interest in Global Citizenship development.

In 2009, I transitioned into a role with the UPEI International Relations Office as the Coordinator of International Student Mobility where I am currently responsible for sending students all over the world to experience International Education first hand as well as coordinating exchange students to come to UPEI for semester or yearlong study opportunities. I have served on several internationally focussed committees on campus, been part of numerous international trade missions representing UPEI and play a role in developing new and nurturing our existing international partnership agreements. To date, UPEI has more than 50 student exchange partnerships in 22 countries and more than 125 memorandums of understanding in 45 countries with these numbers continuing to grow. Each year, approximately 2% of the UPEI student body takes part in some form of International Education opportunity.

Over the last seven years I have observed that our students are in need of becoming more globally minded. From my observations, a great deal of universities and colleges across the country suffer from students not being able to take part in international education due to lack of finances, lack of parental support, false impression that it will extend their time in university and lack of faculty involvement, to name a few. It is extremely important for our students to become global minded citizens in today's day and age and I believe this is something that cannot necessarily be taught directly from a text book. It is my belief that the most important way for students to understand the world is to go abroad and discover it firsthand. My favorite Chinese proverb states, "Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand" (Confucius, n.d.). Students need to develop their global citizen characteristics over time and they can do this by exploring the world around them through international education.

As a result of my position at UPEI, I have come to realize there are two basic types of international experiences for students. The first involves a cultural experience, which may include an

academic semester abroad, short term study program or internship. Although still considered a life “altering” experience, this type of opportunity is suited for the student who is looking for a travel experience. The student may see this as an opportunity to “escape from the more complicated implications of globalization such as terrorist threats, environmental degradation and the plight of those most suffering in the world” (Lewin, 2009). It is my belief that it is through this type of experience that students discover their personal, social, cultural, moral and spiritual selves.

The second type of international experience involves something deeper which involves a practicum, volunteer experience or development work. Students often become very engaged in the local community, and the work they are involved in has a more humanitarian aspect than the generic academic exchange semester or study abroad experience. This may be considered a “life changing” experience as this opportunity is more focussed on the impact and assessment of the work being performed internationally. “If our aim is to develop global citizens, we must understand that the experience of studying at a university in a developing country may not be only about the formal acquisition of knowledge delivered in the classroom but also the holistic experience of studying at that institution, including adapting to its academic culture and the institutions limited resources” (Lewin, 2009, p. 8). It is during this experience that I believe students discover their personal, academic and professional selves. I believe it is this deeper experience that helps a student determine her/his correct academic and professional path.

I have seen, firsthand, the benefits of students going abroad for a semester or a year of academic study, internships or practicum. Every student has come back to say it was the best thing they have ever done! One particular student came into my office to talk about his interest in studying abroad for an academic semester. Initially, he could barely look me in the eye when he came for his meetings, he was so shy. I was concerned that I had made the wrong decision by sending him overseas. He completed his semester and arrived back home. We had a debriefing session upon his return and I could not believe this was the same individual. He had been

transformed into a mature, focussed and culturally diverse man. His first question to me was, “Where can I go next”? After our meeting, he was speaking at information sessions promoting our programs, he was coaching other students on the benefits of going abroad and he was planning his next academic semester abroad. The transformative impact of the international learning on students' academic and personal development I have observed through the years is the most critical reason why I love what I do as an international educator. A student's time abroad in university is usually the first stepping stone to them becoming globally competent as a responsible citizen not only to her/his own country, but also to an increasingly globalized society and planet.

The topic of this thesis came to me during one of my M.Ed courses; Global Education. I was reading numerous articles during this particular course in which most of them were focusing on global citizenship. I was intrigued and started to think more critically about my work in the International Relations Office and how we could help students become more engaged and reflective of their experiences during their time abroad. I was introduced to the Specialization in International Education and came to familiarize myself with that program and how it worked. I thought a case study approach of this program and the exchange program would be an interesting way to look into whether or not these international experiences that students embarked upon lead to the development of global citizenship characteristics.

Rationale for this Study

As stated in *Engaging the World*, the strategic plan of Queen's University, “contemporary society calls for leadership that respects but can also bridge geographical, social, cultural, and economic divides” (Queen's University, 2006, p.7). As our world becomes more

interconnected and borderless, there is a realization that our communities are in need of global citizens.

The Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) (2010) in its major report to Canada's Parliament stresses that the, "international knowledge and competencies of Canadian students are crucial for Canada's continued success in an increasingly globalized world . . ." (p. 4). The CBIE further states that the number of Canadian students studying abroad is, "appallingly low" with fewer than three percent of undergraduate students taking part. The Globe and Mail, in commenting on this study called Canadian post-secondary students, "alarmingly provincial, in a globalized age . . ." (Church, 2010). Such reports have sent an urgent message to Canadian universities that more must be done to encourage and facilitate students' participation in programs that help them develop into global citizens. For this reason, this thesis will involve international experiential learning and how it contributes to developing the characteristics of global citizens.

Most post-secondary institutions will agree: Our communities, our nation and our world are in need of more global citizens. There are many definitions of a global citizen, all of which lead to the same end result. Two words that are sometimes used to sum up the definition are "open-minded" and "accepting." With the need to develop more global citizens in our ever shrinking borderless world, our universities are incorporating some form of global education into their classrooms and curriculum. There are also a large number of universities that are using international experiential learning as an effective strategy for global citizen education. Some will argue this is an effective mode of helping students become global citizens, while others will argue that this can be taught at home without traveling abroad. The question is not necessarily which is better but what is the effectiveness of each. One thing that can be agreed upon is that a

global citizen is not born a global citizen; she/he is formed into a global citizen, either through what they learn from teachers and others or through what they learn from experiencing it firsthand.

Research Context

This study was conducted at the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI). For a university as small as UPEI, the institution is making great strides in internationalization. UPEI currently has approximately 12 percent of its undergraduate student population registered as international students. Adding to this cultural dynamic is another one percent of the student body registered as visiting students for a short term academic exchange experience. UPEI has a growing student exchange program with approximately 30 active partnerships in more than 20 countries. The number of UPEI domestic students taking part in the outbound student exchange program is growing every year. As more and more students take part, interest grows which leads to more student inquiries.

Since 2005, internationalization at UPEI has gained a higher profile and an increase in momentum across all disciplines. UPEI's The Internationalization Strategy Document (2008) clearly states that the University aims "to be a university that has a global perspective presented to a diverse student body through curriculum, mobility activities, research, and development opportunities" (p. 3). A priority for continued action in the 2008 International Strategy and Goals update is the need to, "increase our student mobility through various mobility projects, exchanges, and internships" (p. 11). To be able to move these goals forward, it is essential that the UPEI be aware of what students feel would facilitate their abilities to take advantage of opportunities for meaningful international learning experiences. While there is an abundance of

research available on the benefits of study abroad (Bond et al., 2005; Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Lutterman-Aguilar, 2002; Paige, 2009) and studies outlining the reasons for low study abroad numbers (Bond et al.; IES, 2009), little research is available on the needs/preferences of students interested in international experiences (Garver, 2007) and even less is available on the connection between education abroad and global citizenship development.

The Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the extent that International Experiential Learning opportunities contribute to the development of global citizenship characteristics. The title for this thesis is: *Developing Global Citizenship in Higher Education through International Experiential Learning: An Interpretive Case Study*. This study addresses the following questions:

What does global citizenship mean for participants?

What are participants' lived experiences during the international experiential learning (IEL) process?

What practices and strategies adopted by the international experiential learning programs facilitate students' development as global citizens?

More specifically, this research will determine whether or not students understand global citizenship. It will also serve as a vehicle to understand and explore whether or not there is a connection between IEL and the development of global citizenship characteristics. It is important to note that an IEL opportunity can take several forms, most notably: internships/work terms, academic exchange, short term study programs and practica; therefore, this research will also identify why students take part in IEL opportunities while highlighting the value of such

opportunities. According to Donnelly-Smith (2009), institutions must continue to develop programs that are appealing and accessible to a broad range of students.

Summary

In this introductory chapter I have outlined my interest in international experiential learning while drawing attention to the lack of international education taking place nationwide. I have introduced the research rationale, context, purpose, and objectives of this study. In next Chapter I will present the literature review I conducted and the significance for this study.

CHAPTER II: Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

“Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand.”

~Confucius~

In this chapter, I will discuss the literature related to internationalization in higher education, internationalization at UPEI, international experiential learning, and global citizenship. This chapter will also discuss the internationalization at UPEI and developing global citizenship through international experiential learning. The theoretical framework for this study was informed and shaped by John Dewey's theory on experiential learning, David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. This chapter provides an overview of these theories and how this framework is applied to guide this study. The summarizing of this chapter will include an architectural idea behind the framework.

Internationalization of Higher Education

Internationalization is a term used to describe the actions taken (policies, procedures and programs) to cope with the global academic environment of the 21st century -- otherwise known as globalization (Altback et al., 2009; Altback & Knight, 2009; De Wit, 2011). Globalization is happening regardless; internationalization is how we choose to respond to globalization. De Wit (2011), states, Teichler claims internationalization is anything on a global scale related to higher education. Knight (2008) also supports this with her definition of internationalization as, “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (p. 21).

Whether an institution acts or reacts to the realities of globalization, choosing to be an internationalized higher education institution means allowing students the ability to learn about

or experience firsthand, other cultures, countries and practices. This may be through short term study abroad, academic semester exchange, curriculum infused with international aspects, overseas practicum placements, international service learning, international partnerships, international research, international student recruitment and internships abroad.

Internationalization can also be broken down into two different pillars: internationalization at home and internationalization abroad. Knight (2008) defines the term, internationalization at home as the, “aspects of internationalization that take place on the home campus” and the term internationalization as, “international education abroad or cross-border education” (p. 22).

Some of the terms that are used to define internationalization at home include, “curriculum related: international studies, global studies, multicultural education, intercultural education, peace education, etc.” (De Wit 2011, p. 243). International education abroad could be defined as “mobility related: study abroad, education abroad, academic mobility, etc” (Knight 2008, p. 22).

Internationalization at the University of Prince Edward Island

Each faculty on campus has its own international component. For example, the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC) has the option for students to conduct an external rotation, which means the student will spend a two week internship or practicum at an international clinic or animal hospital. Nursing students and Nutritional Science students have the option to spend their clinical placements in Kenya as part of the Students for Development program. This program is run as a joint effort between the School of Nursing, the Department of Nutritional Science and the International Relations Office. This program is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and offers students funding to take part in three month internships in small communities in Kenya in conjunction with the local branch of Farmers Helping

Farmers. The School of Business at UPEI holds the largest number of exchange partnerships on campus and offers a Specialization in International Business with the option to fulfill an academic semester abroad or co-operative education internship along with numerous other requirements. The Faculty of Education has a Specialization in International Education which requires the students enrolled to complete their six week practicum placement at an international partner school. It also has a Specialization in Indigenous Education with options for students to complete a six week practicum placement in a Saami Indigenous community in Northern Sweden and several Maori Indigenous communities in New Zealand. Students enrolled in Physics, Business and Computer Science also have the opportunity to go abroad through the co-operative education program to conduct their internships anywhere in the world. These students work with the Co-operative Education Office to ensure their international work terms are recognized and properly fulfilled in order to achieve credit for the experience.

In past years, UPEI had numerous projects funded by the Human Resource and Skills Development Agency's International Academic Mobility program. AVC held three projects under this program which allowed for a total funding amount of \$600,000 to send AVC students abroad. The School of Business also held three of these projects over the years for a total funding amount of \$520,000 and the School of Nursing held two of these projects for a total of \$320,000. The Faculty of Education took the lead on a three-year \$290,000 project in Promoting Enterprise Education in Teacher Education and was a principal partner in two companion projects in Advancing Inclusionary Practice in Post-Secondary Education and Advocacy and Leadership for Persons with Disabilities. These federally funded projects played an enormous role in helping UPEI students, as well as other Canadian students across the country, achieve some form of an international experiential learning opportunity. Unfortunately, the Canadian

Government has ended this program as of 2014. It is hoped that efforts to develop some other form of funding opportunity will soon be realized.

Students can also experience global education through many courses offered at UPEI with an international component or by enrolling in the recently developed mandatory Global Issues 151 course which is a unique course to UPEI. The goals of this course are to help students see beyond superficial analyses of politics, philosophy, economics, etc. and look deeper into the issues affecting our world.

The above activities are examples of how UPEI is internationalizing its campus. The partnerships being formed with other institutions around the world are growing all the time. UPEI is a small university making mighty strides in internationalization.

International Experiential Learning

International Experiential Learning (IEL) is also another name for international education abroad and can take on many forms such as short term study abroad, academic exchange, internship, and practicum placements. One of the main objectives of a university offering IEL is to develop global citizens with critical and diverse perspectives. While seen as a key element for internationalizing universities in Canada and abroad, the numbers in Canada taking part are still quite low. In the 2012 report produced by Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada's Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy there is discussion around the importance of international education for higher education students and how this will help these students "acquire a global perspective, thus helping them to become citizens of the world" (p. Viii). This idea and this statement help to support the importance of Canadian students gaining international exposure while adding value to their degree through international experiential

learning opportunities. The report also recommends that Canada increase the number of students taking part in these opportunities to 50,000 per year by 2022. According to Altbach and Knight (2007) it is Australia's goal to have, "15 million students study abroad by 2025 -- up from the current two million" (p. 303). Canada may be lagging behind in this field of education.

Canada is not the only country that experiences this problem. According to Goodman (2009) "less than one percent of all American college and university students are studying abroad in a given academic year" (p. 610). Tarrant (2009) supports this number in his article submitted to the *Journal of Studies in International Education* by stating that, "less than five percent of all students enrolled [in the USA] in postsecondary education," have an international experience before they graduate (p. 434). There are many reasons for these low numbers such as lack of financial resources, fear of the unknown, the inability to want to leave home, etc.; however, lack of opportunities is not a reason for the low numbers. As students are challenged to become global minded individuals, postsecondary institutions are offering more and more opportunities for students to leave home to study, research or volunteer in the areas of health, environment, business and social issues in order to help in their development as global citizens.

Developing global citizenship characteristics and learning from others, like cultures, traditions, histories and language are key components of international experiential learning and immersing in another culture provides rich opportunities to expand one's perspectives and new ways of thinking. However, IEL opportunities are also full of complexities and obstacles because of the contextual, linguistic, racial, and cultural differences encountered by the learners. Paul Tarc (2013) points out that a new frame of reference generated from IEL learning opportunities will illuminate limits or 'blind spots' in one's present way of thinking toward expanding one's intellectual and moral vision. Through the international experiences, participants can expand the

capacity to understand, ethically engage and live with others in pluralistic, porous societies as global citizens

Defining Global Citizenship

According to Schattle (2009) and Green (2012), national citizenship is an accident of birth. Although global citizenship is not a new term, it is not easy to define it as global citizenship does not entail any legal status. Many universities and colleges throughout the world have some form of the term written into their mission statements, vision statements and/or their strategic plans. Engagement with the literature on global citizenship and global education suggests that the concept of global citizenship differs across disciplines (Abdi & Shultz, 2008; Desveaux & Guo, 2011; O'Sullivan & Pashby, 2008) and, indeed, from author to author (Guo, 2013; Reid, Gill, & Sears, 2010; Tupper & Cappelo, 2012). There are numerous definitions and a variety of views on the actual meaning of the term, but if the two words are defined separately, one would take "citizenship" to mean where a person is from or her/his nationality and "global" to simply mean "the world". Does that lead us to believe that global citizenship is defined as a person who lives within the whole world? There is some element of truth to this, but global citizenship is far more. Global citizenship is a way of thinking and behaving as we are all citizens of the same world and our actions, decisions and choices eventually affect everyone. The elements or characteristics that make up global citizenship have to be explored in order to truly understand the meaning of the term.

McIntosh (2009) in *Gender Perspectives on Educating for Global Citizenship* associated global citizenship with the ability to

observe oneself and the world around one, the ability to make comparisons and contrasts, the ability to 'see' plurally as a result, the ability to understand that both 'reality' and language come in versions, the ability to see power relations and understand them systemically, and the ability to balance awareness of one's own realities with the realities of entities outside of the perceived self (p. 385).

Braskamp (2008) supports this thought in his article titled *Developing Global Citizens* when he writes "College students that view themselves as global citizens also express a complex view of knowing, are committed to the common good, and desire to relate to others unlike them" (p. 1). This is an important view and Schattle (2009) gathers support for this in his article *Global Citizenship in Theory and Practice* when he writes about respecting equal worth of all members of the community of humankind and how respecting the well-being of distant strangers should be as much of a concern to us as the well-being of our neighbours (p. 3). As stated by Keeping and Shaprio (2008) in their report, *Global Citizenship: What is it, and What are Our Ethical Obligations as Global Citizens*, "global citizenship is not a legal status" and "it is an attitude towards the rest of the world" (p. 1). Nassbaum (as cited by in Dolby, 2008) proposes three principles in,

fostering for global human connections: (a) critical examination of oneself and one's traditions, (b) the ability to see oneself as human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern, and (c) the development of the narrative imagination which allows one to imagine oneself in the shoes of someone whose life experience is considerably different from one's own (p.53).

This is supported by Roddick (2007) in her case study, *Global Citizenship Perspectives*, “Global citizenship is based on a moral identity, hinged upon a global responsibility for everyone to care about each other regardless of location or nationality” (p. 4). Roddick also cites Nassbaum and Dower in this article, “global citizen is destined to feel a moral responsibility to all those around the world” (p. 4).

If global citizenship is not a status but more a way of thinking or an attitude toward the world, the elements that make up this attitude need to be investigated. Schattle (2009) outlines that, “Global citizenship is made up of such characteristics as awareness, responsibility, participation, cross-cultural empathy, international mobility and personal achievement” (p. 3). These characteristics are supported by Hovey and Weinberg (as cited in Schattle, 2009) in their article, *Global Learning and the Making of Citizen Diplomats* when they discuss the three primary characteristics of global citizenship as a practice to be, “awareness of both self and external, responsibility expressed as principled decision making, and participation in public affairs focussed on accountability and social change” (p. 42). Roddick (2007) supports by summarizing his respondents and citing that, “the most important quality in a global citizen was having an ‘open-mind’ and” the second most important quality listed was awareness” (p. 12). Hovey and Weinberg suggest that if the three primary characteristics of global citizenship are awareness, responsibility and participation then the secondary characteristics of global citizenship would be cross-cultural empathy, international mobility and personal achievement.

There are several different categories of global citizens and Falk and Urry (as cited in Shattle, 2009) categorize these into the following five categories: (a) Global Cosmopolitans -- individuals who develop through extensive international travel; (b) Global Activists -- individuals who campaign for different causes (i.e., human rights, poverty, etc.), (c) Global

Reformers -- individuals who advocate accountability for all humanity; (d) Global Managers -- individuals who work for global institutions; (e) and Global Capitalists -- individuals who are multinational corporate executives. Schattle goes on to discuss that a category not recognized by Falk and Urry is global educators. He defines a global educator as an individual who, “strives to render their students competitive in the international economy, while also instilling awareness and empathy of other countries, cultures, and issues of common concern across the planet” (p. 6).

Global citizenship may not be as much about where a person is from, but more to do with how a person adapts and relates to new surroundings, culture and people. Global citizens should not fear other cultures; they should be curious about other cultures and want to share their own culture with others. According to Schattle (2009) some individuals who self-describe as global citizens are international travellers and could adapt anywhere in the world while maintaining high living standards (p. 17). This is not immersing oneself in a different culture. This is maintaining a certain lifestyle in a different location. Global citizenship has little to do with travel and more to do with lifestyle. In referencing one of the primary characteristics of global citizenship, as stated earlier, a global citizen should be able to “adapt” and live within a different culture and lifestyle, whether at home or abroad.

Schattle (2009) and Green (2012) suggest that self-awareness may be the initial step of global citizenship. Understanding one’s own country or culture will help individuals be more open-minded about the world around them. Global citizenship, then, is a mind-set not simply ethical purchasing. It is looking beyond the barriers that separate human kind (i.e., religion, nation and ethnicity) and understanding what connects human kind. It is changing our habits and behaviours to be more aware and responsible to the world around us. In examining several articles, journals, case studies, textbooks and more, it has become apparent that there really is no

clear definition of global citizenship and this leads to the question of how important it really is to come to a consensus on the actual meaning. It is more important to understand the primary characteristics of global citizenship: awareness, responsibility and participation.

Developing Global Citizenship Characteristics through IEL

When students enter the working world, they will be asked to make decisions based on the assumption that they have the following global citizen characteristics, as laid out by Bellamy and Weinberg (2006): (a) intercultural understanding, (b) mindfulness, (c) partnerships, (d) pragmatic hope, and (e) social entrepreneurship (p. 20). According to Kolb (2009) 21st century challenges can be addressed by strengthening our economy, national security and our education system to increase foreign language skills and cultural awareness of our students. He goes on to discuss how companies require employees with knowledge of foreign languages and cultures as well as have overseas experience (p. 49). Companies like Boeing have actually created their own, “Global Leadership Programs through which their executives spend a month abroad to enhance their business problem solving skills while being immersed in the country’s culture, business and politics” (p. 57). As cited by Kolb (2009), the Committee for Economic Development (CED) reported that many companies surveyed feel universities and colleges in the US are not preparing their students for cross-cultural experience and their students are, “linguistically deprived” (CED, 2006, p. 6). This coincides with the Globe and Mail labelling Canadian post-secondary students as, “provincially minded in a globalized age” during the paper’s reaction to a recent 2010 study conducted by the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) (p. 6).

It is vital that our universities and colleges commit to building international experiential learning opportunities for students. Not only will it enrich the lives of those involved and help

transform them into well-rounded individuals, it is also a requirement in order to support the future of our economy. According to Kolb (2009), the lack of this knowledge of linguistics and cultural sensitivity will hurt the future of our national security as there is a huge shortage of intelligence with foreign language and cultural training (p. 59).

According to Skelly (2009), any experience abroad will lead to a greater understanding of different cultures. Skelly also goes on to suggest that students must be prepared for the global future and it should be mandatory for students to engage in some form of study abroad during their university career (p. 22). Meaningful experiences and critical reflection on them is required, as students base realities on what they see on television. Their understanding of different cultures is “packaged” for them and is therefore skewed and often far from reality (i.e., Africa is nothing but hunger and poverty or Ireland looks just like in Harry Potter movies). By taking part in an IEL opportunity, students will experience the differences in the world. They will understand that their world is not the only world and that other cultures do things differently.

Most IEL opportunities will have a positive impact on a student’s life, whether it is personally, professionally or educationally. The experience will also enhance a student’s perception of the world in which we live. Wilson (1993) points out that,

The impact of international experience can be divided into two categories:

(a) an internationally experienced person can gain a global perspective, including substantive knowledge and perceptual understanding (as adapted from Case, 1991) and (b) international experiences often lead to personal growth and new interpersonal relationships. (p. 21)

Both of the areas above are part of global citizen education. Wilson (1999) goes on to discuss the impact of IEL on each category as follows:

Gaining a Global Perspective:

Substantive Knowledge: includes knowledge of other cultures and a general awareness of world issues, global dynamics, and human choice

Perceptual Understanding: includes open-mindedness, anticipation of complexity, resistance to stereotyping, inclination to empathize and non-chauvinism

Developing Self and Relationships:

Personal Growth: acceptance of self and others, general maturity, acceptance of responsibility, and especially independence

Interpersonal Connections: long-term intercultural relationships . . . not limited to friendships with persons in the host country . . . also, foreign students in their classes. (p. 22)

Sobania and Braskamp (2009) both agree, “that study abroad provides students with a global perspective, and thus better prepares them for living and leading in our globally interdependent society” (p. 23). Upon graduation (and before) students are expected to understand different cultures, governments, religions and global issues. Hovey and Weinberg (2009) support this idea and they discuss two different approaches to study abroad, which they termed low road and high road programs.

The main difference is based on the fundamental principles that guide the program (p. 37). Low road programs involve students that are sent into the

world with little preparation for culturally thin experiences, they make minimal effort to engage in the local culture or learn the local language and focus on travel and fun (p. 36). High road programs are developed to ensure deep cultural and linguistic immersion through home stays and volunteering or working within the local community. The high road approach takes into consideration four principles: (a) commitment to scale, meaning the programs are the appropriate size for all involved, large enough to support student demand and small enough not to disrupt the local community; (b) emphasis on exposing students to developing regions; (c) ensure students have the appropriate support in place upon re-entry to ensure their experience is shared and continued and (d) commitment to ensuring the opportunity is reciprocated and has economic and social benefits for the host community (pp. 37).

No matter which path is chosen, low road or high road, international experiential learning helps students understand themselves and this needs to be achieved before understanding others. Through this form of education, students realize that their similarities far outweigh their differences and that their differences are exciting and fun, not scary. All involved would agree that we need to build quality IEL opportunities in order to prepare our young people to place active and constructive roles in an interdependent world while being dependent on local thought and action (Davies & Pike, 2009; Hovey & Weinberg, 2009).

Theoretical Framework of this Study

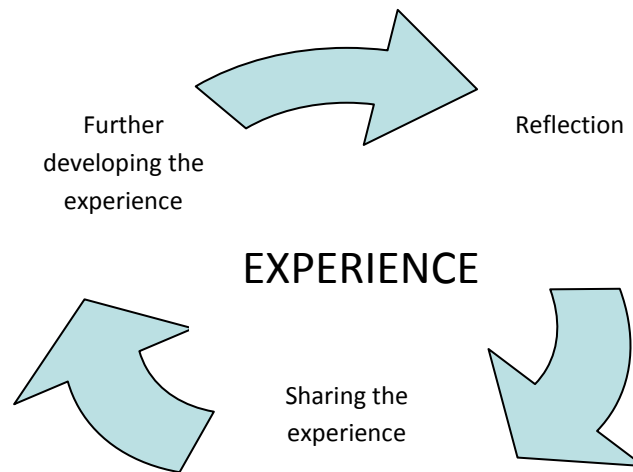
According to Jean Anyon (2011), theory is, “an architecture of ideas – a coherent structure of interrelated concepts whose contemplation and application: (1) help us to understand

and explain discursive and social phenomena and (2) provides a model of the way that discourse and social systems work and can be worked upon” (p. 3). Practice is what we specialize in or are passionate about in terms of teaching or research. This then leads to praxis, which according to Freire (2006) is, "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p. 51). More simply put, praxis can be considered the process of integrating practice, reflection and application which leads to the development of theory.

John Dewey's Theory on Experiential Learning

Learning through doing is how and why I came to appreciate John Dewey’s theory around experiential learning. Meaning is made through experience, reflection, sharing and further developing. I believe most experiences can be educational and ongoing -- if we want them to be. We can either experience something and move on, or we can take each experience and build on it. When we experience something, we need to reflect to understand the significance of the event. Once the experience has been reflected upon, I believe it is important to share it with the world and use it as a stepping stone to build more experiences. The experience is then further developed by putting the knowledge gained to real life use. This cycle is continuous and is how we learn and gain knowledge. Dewey would call this, “intelligent action,” which is, “an educative experience that broadens one’s horizons of experience and knowledge and leads to a deliberate constructive forward momentum” (Dimitiadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p. 10). My architectural idea of what this might look like is this:

Figure 1



David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory

As a form of primary research, I believe when we understand something from experience it adds validity to the learning. Research is a fundamental tool in education. Without research, we would not have the evidence to support what is being taught; therefore, well supported research constitutes effective teaching, and effective teaching leads to superior education. Being able to provide evidence to support research helps to solidify and ground research. Using Dewey's theory as a foundation and building on it, Kolb's work resonated with me and my research. Kolb's background is in social psychology and his focus is theorizing education through his development of Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), which is not only grounded in Dewey's work, but it is also based on the work of Kurt Lewin and Jean Piaget. According to Kolb, using "Dewey's philosophical pragmatism, Lewin's social psychology, and Piaget's cognitive developmental, genetic epistemology forms a unique perspective on learning and development" (Kolb, 1984) (found in Kolb, 1999, p. 2). In other words, how knowledge is obtained affects the validity of it. For example, when a student is studying medieval literature and visits the Cathedrale Notre-Dame d'Amiens in Picardy, France, which was built in the

1200's, their knowledge is taken to a much deeper and more personalized level. What they have been learning and reading about in the classroom, now has real life validation.

According to Kolb, "the theory is called 'Experiential Learning' to emphasize the central role that experience plays in the learning process. The term 'experiential' is used therefore to differentiate ELT both from cognitive learning theories, which tend to emphasize cognition over affect, and behavioral learning theories that deny any role for subjective experience in the learning process" (Kolb, 1984, p. 20). More simply stated, experiential learning theory is a form of constructivism learning theory where knowledge is constructed through real life experiences.

Kolb's theory (1984) is what was used to ground a portion of my research in this thesis. I explored the International Experiential Learning (IEL) opportunities of 10 students and the impact this has on creating global citizenship characteristics. An IEL opportunity can take several forms, most notably: internships/work terms, academic exchange, short term study programs, and practica, all of which have the same underlying common denominator -- experience. Dewey would support this form of progressive education as he believes that learning is a social or interactive process and that students should have the ability to contribute to their own learning. As Dewey (1938) suggests in his book, *Experience and Education*, education and experience teach us how to live. There is no better way to learn this than through an IEL opportunity. In *Theory of Education*, Dimitiadis and Kamberelis (2006) write that Dewey's belief was education and experience to be "cut from the same cloth" (p. 9). It is difficult to have any form of new experience without learning something or taking something away from the experience.

Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

With the need to develop more global citizens in our ever shrinking borderless world, our universities are incorporating some form of global education into their classrooms and curriculum. There are also a large number of universities that are using international experiential learning (IEL) as an effective strategy for global citizen education. It is my belief that a global citizen is not born a global

citizen; she/he is formed into a global citizen, either through what they learn from teachers and others, or through lived experiences. This idea is based on Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which is summed up by Dimitriadis and Kamberelis in *Theory for Education* as, "people, society and culture playing a pivotal role in one's development" (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p. 191).

My thesis research will highlight the value of IEL opportunities and how these experiences help transform our students into global citizens. This research will also serve as a vehicle to understand and explore the reason for and the barriers to, student participation in IEL opportunities while identifying gaps in current IEL program offerings. According to Donnelly-Smith (2009), institutions must continue to develop programs that are appealing and accessible to a broad range of students.

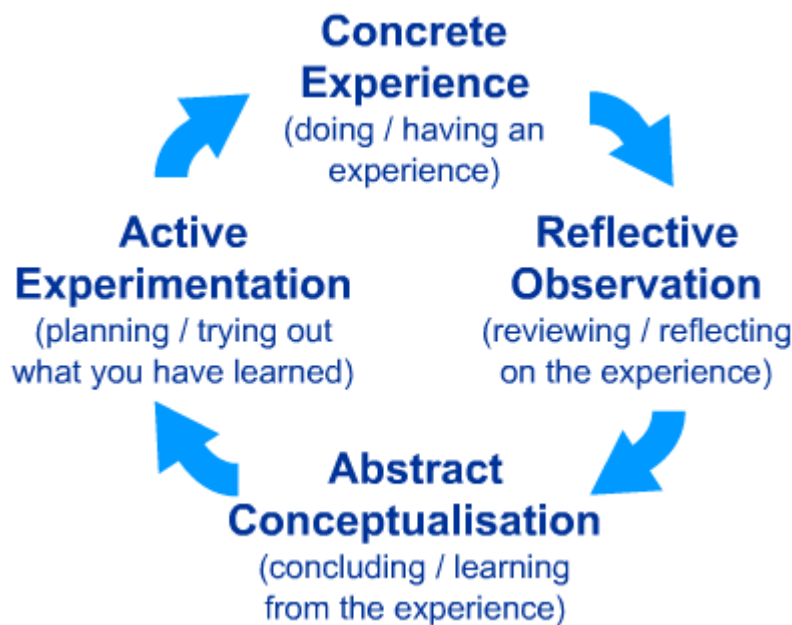
My epistemological belief involves providing guidance through IEL opportunities in order for students to experience discovery in the areas of personal, social, cultural, academic, moral, professional and spiritual growth. It is through these discoveries that our students are transformed into global citizens. However, not all experiences can fulfill all of these discoveries simultaneously. Any IEL opportunity will lead to personal discovery, but the other six areas of discovery are found in different opportunities.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory or socialization theory not only sheds light on learning influenced by peers, but also on learning influenced by culture. It is Vygotsky's construct of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) that supports my belief that students discover different aspects of themselves that eventually leads to the development of global citizens. Learning in the ZPD, as outlined by Dimitriadis and Kamberelis in *Theory of Education* "leads not only to the development of concepts and knowledge but also to the development of culturally appropriate practices." (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p. 197)

During the development of my thesis, I constructed a before, during and after IEL set of questions that I delivered to two groups of students to support my hypothesis. For both types of international experiences discussed above, it is the students' reflection of the lived experience that truly interprets and

broadens the view of the discoveries. This is where David Kolb's experiential learning model is brought forth to support my thoughts and is what grounds my ideas around IEL. Reflecting on the lived experience is the key to understanding all areas of discovery:

FIGURE 2



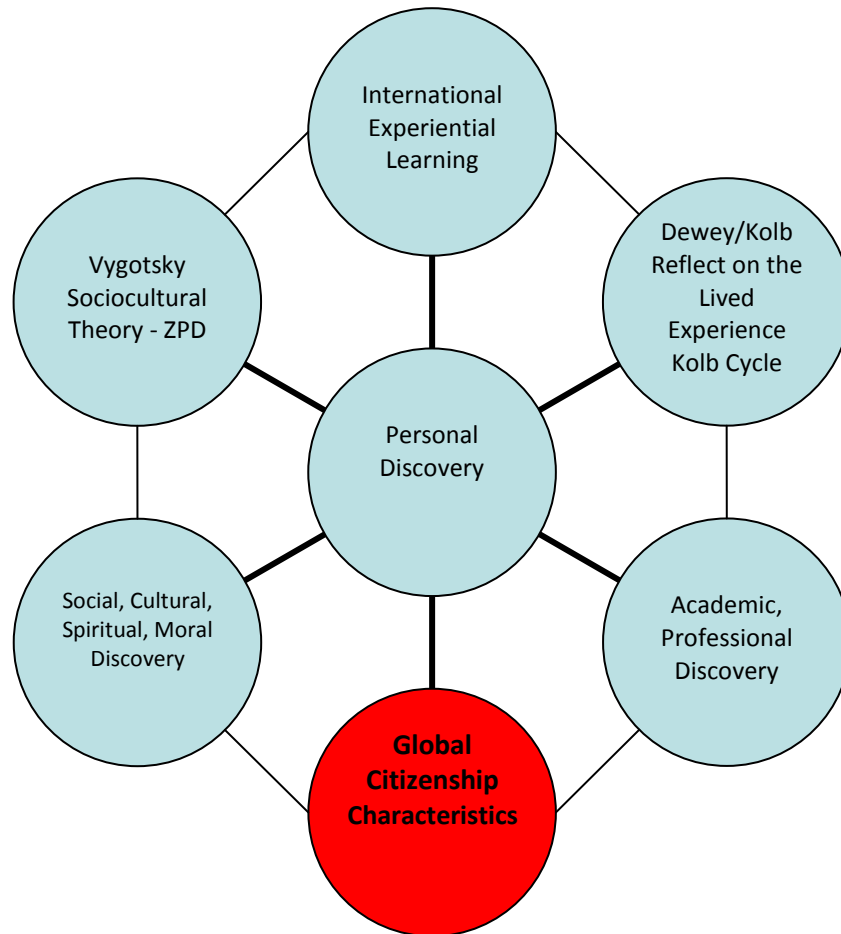
The Kolb Cycle (see figure 2) represents that learning through experience should be tested and is an ongoing cycle of experience and testing. For example, the Concrete Experience would be the IEL opportunity that a student takes part in while abroad, which is laden with many concrete experiences. The Reflective Observation, would be reflecting upon this lived experience. This could either be done through guided questions for reflection or the students would simply blog or journal as they go along. The Abstract Conceptualization takes place when the student concludes what she/he has learned from the experience. What areas of discovery have come from the experience or what is taken away from the experience? Finally, Active Experimentation occurs when the student takes what she/he has learned from the experience and

adapts this to a new experience. This could be a change in career focus, change in academic direction, independence, or any other form of discovery and how these discoveries effect future decisions. From here, the cycle begins all over again. This cycle helps students realize their areas of discovery more clearly. It also allows students to observe themselves in the world around them, compare and contrast each new experience, see plural, understand that reality and language differ everywhere they go, understand power relations in different cultures and themselves, and balance their own awareness with the realities around them. This summarizes McIntosh's definition of global citizen which was outlined on page 16 of this chapter.

In discussion with Alan Duncan, the former Director of International Business programs at UPEI, he said that living and working in other countries is often seen as a life-altering experience and an excellent way for students to add value to their degree (Alan Duncan, personal conversation, May 2011). According to Larry Braskamp, "students like experiential learning...they favor the pedagogy of active engagement" (Braskamp, 2008, p. 3). It is what Larry Cuban would refer to as "learned curriculum" (Cuban, 1993, p. 184). An international experience then, is a defining moment in a student's life and continues to impact their life for years after the experience (Dwyer, 2009). A defining moment that has a profound effect on how we are helping our students transform into the global citizens our nation and world require.

ARCHITECTURAL IDEA OF THIS THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

FIGURE 3



The architectural diagram above reflects what this theoretical framework might look like. The final circular shape in the diagram is the end result of the IEL; the development of global citizenship characteristics. These characteristics encompass the primary and secondary characteristics described in Chapter two.

The Significance of this Study

Although there is much literature on IEL and global citizenship education, I have not found a study examining how and what IEL opportunities most effectively contribute to the development of global citizenship in higher education. This study fills the gap in this area by examining different IEL programs offered at UPEI and the correlation between these programs and the development of global citizenship characteristics by seeking to determine whether or not the primary and/or secondary characteristics outlined on pages 22-23 have been developed during their time abroad. This will be determined through a thorough analysis of the pre-departure focus group sessions, the reflection question responses and the post-IEL focus group sessions. Each of these forms of data collection will be discussed further in Chapter three.

Summary

This chapter discusses global citizenship while outlining several pieces of literature to support the meaning of the term. I also discuss the idea behind internationalization of higher education in a broad sense and at UPEI. The chapter also highlights the basis for experiential learning and how it relates to education abroad. The chapter looks at the cycle of learning by reflection and sharing, leading to a deeper understanding of the experience that has taken place. The meaning of International Experiential Learning and its different forms are explored while discussing the theoretical frameworks that guided this study. The chapter concludes with an architectural idea of what this theoretical framework might look like in realm of International Experiential Learning and its relationship to global citizenship characteristics.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

“The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page.”

~ St. Augustine ~

This chapter begins by discussing the design of this study. Because the purpose of this study was to understand participants' international experiential learning experiences and explore the connections between these experiences and their development as global citizens, a qualitative research design was adopted as it allowed me to “keep focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about their experience” (Creswell, 2004, p. 175). Understanding the connection, if there is one, would allow me to gain a better understanding of UPEI's international experiential learning programs and to examine if we are doing enough to properly help our students develop the global citizenship characteristics needed in today's global society. In this chapter, I will discuss my role as the researcher, the participant selection process, data collection methods, data analysis and interpretation, and limitations of the study.

Case Study as the Research Methodology

This study was conducted within the contexts of two specific international programs at UPEI. The first one is the International Academic Exchange (IAE) program administered by UPEI's International Relations Office. Through this program, approximately 30 students per year study abroad for an academic semester or year as part of reciprocal exchange agreements with UPEI's international partner institutions. These partner institutions are located in such countries as Germany, Turkey, Barbados, Korea, Japan, Sweden, Mexico and the USA. The second program involved in this study is the UPEI Faculty of Education's Bachelor of Education program, which offers two specializations respectively in International Education (SIE) and

Indigenous Education. Through these two specializations, approximately 25 students each year conduct a six-week teaching practicum at partner schools in such countries as China, France, Kenya, Sweden, New Zealand, Costa Rica, Argentina, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

A case study approach was adopted as the methodology for this study as it is “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (Creswell, 2004, p. 13) and it allows an in-depth study of a single unit, such as one individual, one group, one organization, one program, and so on (Ary et al., 2006). Since the students involved in this study were either taking part in an international experiential learning opportunity required by a program or a voluntary bilateral exchange program, the case study methodology enabled me as the researcher to focus on contextual particularities and complexities of the international experiential learning opportunity in each program as well as their significance through a close look at meta-issues of greater relevance to theorization, policy, structure, and practice (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006) related to the topic under investigation.

In order to explore the issues related to the development of global citizenship in depth and in detail, the case study approach with a qualitative orientation requires that “multiple sources of data collection methods are used, which typically consist of interviews, observations, and documents, rather than relying on a single data source” (Creswell, 2004, p. 175). To achieve the purpose of this study, multiple methods of data collection were used, including a demographic survey, focus groups, and participants’ reflective journals.

Participants

In December 2012, once ethical approval from the University of Prince Edward Island’s Research Education Board (REB) was received (see Appendix A), two groups of students were approached to participate in this study. These students were either taking part in UPEI’s

International Academic Exchange Program or the Specialization of Indigenous and/or International Education (SIE) at UPEI's Faculty of Education. The first group was approached during a pre-departure session with the bilateral exchange students and the second group was approached during a pre-departure session with the Bachelor of Education students who would be conducting their 6-week teaching practicum abroad. I provided each group with a package that included an introduction letter (see Appendix B), two research invitation/consent forms (see Appendix C), a demographic survey (see Appendix D) and an envelope. The introduction letter explained the purpose of the study and how participants would engage in the study while the consent forms allowed the students to anonymously deny or accept my invitation. Five exchange students and 8 SIE students agreed to participate in this study. Of the 8 Faculty of Education SIE students, I chose the first 5 and kept the remaining 3 as back up participants should someone drop out before the first focus group session. A total of 10 students were recruited to take part in this study and this number represents approximately 18 percent of the overall number of students (about 55 students per year) who participate in the international experiential learning activities through these two programs.. The advantage of having a small student population at UPEI allows me to have a more intimate connection with the students and also provides an environment where students are more willing and able to participate in the data collection. Students at UPEI feel they have a voice. Their stories, opinions and recommendations will be used to enhance the programming to ensure the best quality opportunities for future students. This enhances my confidence that the results of this research will benefit the greater field of international education and will be shared with my colleagues in the province and nation as well as with our international partners around the world through conference presentations, seminars and more. I have dedicated my experience, knowledge, passion and expertise to this research.

My Role as the Researcher

As the primary researcher, I am the primary means for collecting, transcribing, organizing, interpreting and analysing the data. Because I am also staff at the university, it was important to let the participants know my role as a research was merely that and nothing else. When we met in our first focus group, I made it clear that I was stepping out of my role as the exchange coordinator and into my role as a researcher. Even though I was leading the focus groups, I remained passive unless I needed to probe further for deeper responses.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was carried out in the form of a short survey (see Appendix D), a pre-departure focus group (see Appendix E) with two different groups of students as well as guided individual reflection questions (see Appendix F) during their time abroad, followed by a return focus group asking the same questions with each of the two groups of students.

Demographic Survey/Questionnaire

Ary et al. (2006) describe surveys as, “instruments such as questionnaires and interviews to gather information from groups of subjects, permitting the researcher to summarize the characteristics of different groups” (p. 31). The short questionnaire provided in the recruitment phase was chosen as a way to capture the demographics, such as age, gender and nationality of the group of 10 individuals. The questionnaire also focussed on year of study, program of study and past experience abroad. The completed questionnaires were kept in a locked drawer and only accessible by me. The questionnaire will be shredded after successful completion of the Master of Education program.

Before the IEL Experiences

A list of questions was developed and used for both the Bilateral Exchange Focus Group and the Bachelor of Education Focus Group (see Appendix E). The list was organized to provide feedback to the primary research question and sub questions. The primary research question for this thesis was, “To what extent do international experiential learning opportunities contribute to the development of global citizens?” The sub questions to be addressed were: (a) What does global citizenship mean for participants? (b) What changes happened to participants during the international experiential learning (IEL) process? (c) What practices and strategies adopted by the international experiential learning programs effectively facilitate students' development as global citizens?

Pre-departure Focus Groups

The focus group sessions were each held in the boardroom of the International Relations Office, located in the Robertson Library building of UPEI. I introduced myself to them, talked about the expectations as to how the focus group would flow and made sure they had some fruit, snacks and beverages to make them feel comfortable. Data were collected electronically through a voice recorder. The voice recorder was placed in the centre of the boardroom table in the midst of all participants. The data were transcribed verbatim into text data files after each session. All data were kept confidential. Once transcribed, copies were kept in three different locations to ensure no data were lost. These three locations included a USB, a personal drive at UPEI and a home computer.

The aims of the focus group sessions were: (1) To establish a sense of whether or not the students understood the term, “global citizenship” and their thoughts and ideas around this term. (2) Why they chose their international experience? (3) Whether or not they were prepared for

their time abroad? (4) How their program contributed to their preparedness of the experience? (5) What if anything they would change about their experience?

The first focus group represented the bilateral exchange program facilitated by the UPEI International Relations Office and the second group represented students from the Specialization in International Education and the Specialization in Indigenous Education facilitated by the UPEI Faculty of Education. All focus groups went as planned except for the return focus group for the bilateral exchange students. Unfortunately, only 2 exchange students were able to physically present for the focus group session. Two of the remaining 3 students were out of the country and the third was tied up with his co-operative work term and therefore was unable to meet at any of the proposed time slots. These remaining 3 students were provided with the general list of questions and asked to submit their responses electronically, which they all did. As Craswell (2004) discusses, qualitative research is emergent, the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed and the phases and processes may change. The forms of data collection may shift (p. 175). Life happens and we cannot always be sure that the processes will remain on track as originally intended.

According to Yin (2003) the strengths of a focus group interview are targeted and insightful, meaning that they focus directly on the case study topic and they provide perceived causal inferences (p. 86). The weaknesses are the potential of poorly constructed questions, response bias, inaccuracies due to poor recall and the potential for a participant to say what she/he believes the interviewer wants to hear (p. 86). The strengths outweigh the weaknesses, which is another reason why this method was chosen. The weaknesses were eliminated by reconstructing the questions as needed (using the same questions but probing further) and holding the focus group interviews directly after the students returned while their experience was still fresh in their minds. The focus group approach was chosen as it seemed like the best way to

gather a wealth of in-depth information in a short time and also because it seemed to be the best approach for this homogeneous group of individuals. According to Patton (2002), focus groups involve open-ended interviews with groups of five to eight people specially targeted on focussed issues...and involve bringing together people of similar backgrounds and experiences to participate in a group interview about major issues that affect them (p. 236). Because these students were going through a lived experience, reflective questioning was the next method chosen as a way to allow students to look back on what was taking place, or what they were experiencing, and really understand it. “Phenomenological reflection is not introspective but retrospective. Reflection on lived experience is always recollective; it is reflection on experience that is already passed or lived through” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 9). Each student was asked to reflect on the same question. A different question was provided at the end of each week for Bachelor of Education students and at the end of each month for the exchange students. All students were provided with the same four questions and were asked to reflect back over the time spent and provide their answers electronically.

Focus Group #1 – Bilateral Exchange Students

Data collection started in December 2012 with a pre-departure focus group of 5 bilateral exchange students heading to their host institutions for the January 2013 semester. Most of these students were in school full time and/or working so the most convenience time to hold the first focus group was in the evening at a mutually convenient time for all. This first group consisted of 2 Caucasian females between 19 and 25 born in PEI, 1 Caucasian male between 19 and 25 born in PEI and 2 Caucasian females between 19 and 25 born outside of PEI. Of the 5 students, 3 are business majors, 1 is a political studies major and the fifth has not declared a major. All of the 5 participants were doing either a major or minor in a second language or already spoke more

than one language. Four of the 5 students had some form of international experience in the past, whether through a family vacation or educational experience. Each student introduced themselves and provided only first names to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

The first focus group was more difficult than originally anticipated. With extremely limited knowledge and experience in conducting a focus group, not a lot of probing took place. The focus group session turned into more of a round table question and answer session or semi-structured interview process. The bilateral exchange students participated really well, with nearly each student providing some form of a response to each question. The aim of the first focus group session was to establish a sense of whether or not the students understood the term “global citizenship” and their thoughts around this term; why they chose their international experience; whether or not they were prepared for their time abroad; how their program contributed to their preparedness of the experience; and what if anything they would change about their experience. A full list of questions can be found in Appendix E.

Focus Group #2 – Bachelor of Education Students

The second focus group was held in February 2013. The 5 Bachelor of Education students chosen for the focus group were all in school full time and/or working so the most convenience time to hold the first focus group was in the evening at a mutually convenient time for all. This second group consisted of 2 Caucasian females between 19 and 25 born in PEI, 1 Caucasian female between 19 and 25 born outside of PEI, 1 Caucasian female between 26 and 30 born in PEI, and 1 Caucasian female over the age of 36 born in PEI. All of the 5 participants were doing either a Bachelor of Education with a Specialization in Indigenous Education or a Specialization in International Education. Four of the 5 students have had some form of international experience in the past, whether through a family vacation, educational experience

or working abroad. Each student introduced themselves and provided only first names to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. All 5 students participated, with nearly each student providing some form of a response to each question.

Participants' IEL Reflections

Guided reflection questions were used with the two groups (see Appendix F). For the exchange students, they were asked to answer one question per month for a total for four months. For the Bachelor of Education students, because they were already being asked to provide reflections to their program coordinator, my four questions were incorporated into this list and the student answered one question per week during their time abroad. The four questions for the Bachelor of Education students were answered throughout their six week practicum. The reflections were gathered from both groups between January 2013 and April 2013. All were submitted electronically.

I started reading the reflections as they came in and highlighted key terms and made notes of potential key themes. Once all the reflections had been gathered, each one was read multiple times. The data were sorted according to participants and also according to the questions. The data were analysed and read in multiple ways, grouping similar topics, terms, commonalities and themes.

Post IEL Focus Groups

Focus Group #3 – Bachelor of Education Students

The return focus group for the Bachelor of Education students was held in May 2013. The set up and introductory discussion was exactly the same as the initial focus group held prior to their departure. As well, the same focus group questions were used. The reasoning behind using the same set of questions was to determine if there was much, if any, change in their

responses pre and post IEL. The data were also collected by voice recorder and transcribed verbatim into text file shortly after the session. The common themes that emerged from this follow up focus group were the same as the pre-departure focus group. There were differences in the overall responses; however, these differences emerged when students were asked about the impact the IEL has had on their lives, career and identity as well as whether or not they now consider themselves to be global citizens. The advantage of being in the room with these 5 students while asking them questions was that I could see the excitement and new found confidence on their faces. They were smiling from ear to ear and the chatter was non-stop. They could not wait to talk about their experience. Prior to departure, during the first focus group, I could see some anxiety and sense the feeling of unknown. This was obvious as they sat quietly, barely speaking but also apparent when they verbally expressed they were not sure what to expect with regard to their upcoming adventure.

Focus Group #4 – Bilateral Exchange Students

This focus group was extremely difficult to coordinate. Two of the 5 students were able to attend this session, which was held in mid-July 2013. Of the remaining 3, 2 were out of the country and 1 was busy with a new job. Since I could not find a mutually convenient time for all to be in attendance, I asked the 3 students that could not be available to provide answers to the list of proposed questions electronically.

Unfortunately, there was no room for probing with the electronic submissions. The data were transcribed shortly after the session. The electronic submissions from the 3 unavailable students was read and analysed.

Ethical Considerations

As mentioned previously, ethical approval was granted on December 3, 2012 from the University of Prince Edward Island's Research Ethics Board. Participation in the study was completely voluntary and participants were able to withdraw at any time without penalty. My relationship with the exchange students is strictly on a facilitation basis. To date, it is not mandatory to enrol in the exchange program and therefore it is not for credit, hence no academic grading would take place between me and the students. With regard to the Bachelor of Education students, their program details are facilitated through their program coordinators. Even though their practicum placements are mandatory, I was not involved in any way with the academic piece of their program. The above indicates absolutely no power relationship between the participants and the researcher.

Prior to each focus group, participants were reminded that their responses were being recorded and that participation was voluntary. All participants signed consent forms (see Appendix C) and all names were kept confidential. Students were labelled as "Student A, B, C etc." in order to maintain anonymity.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Patton (2012) describes a case study as being, "made up of many smaller cases -- the stories of specific individuals, families, organizations units, and other groups" (p. 297). This approach is perfectly suited to the research as it will take the students' experiences from beginning to end and thematically analyse the stories for presentation.

Once collected, a series of steps were used to analyze the data. These steps included transcribing, deconstructing and reconstructing the data to find similar terminology, phrases and

common themes and therefore, the approach that was taken was thematic analysis, which Creswell (2009) considers to be, “basic qualitative analysis” (p. 184).

While reading through the transcripts several times, I circled sections of text and underlined repetitive words that revealed similar thought patterns and personal perspectives. I made notes in the margins of the pages as they came to mind to remind myself of what I thought to be the underlying meaning. This form of content analysis allowed me to take the large volume of data and identify core consistencies and meanings to develop the key themes (Patton, 2002).

Key Themes

According to Creswell (2009), “themes are analyzed for each individual case and across different cases (as in case studies) or shaped into a general description (as in phenomenology) (p.189). Key themes help tie together all areas of the research and in order to do this, the data needed to be deconstructed and reconstructed. I sorted the text by sessions and then I sorted the text by students. I then looked for word repetition and key words in context. I sorted similar words with similar meaning.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

To ensure confidentiality for the participants, the data collected was not shared with anyone. I performed the transcription and I was the only person who knew who my 10 participants were. I wanted to make sure the students understood that their responses were only being read by me so they felt comfortable sharing their true feelings with me. I needed them to understand that their responses and their shared experiences would have absolutely no impact on them academically.

Anonymity was assured by assigning each of the students a letter instead of using their real names for identification purposes. For example, the ten students involved were labelled students “A” through “J.”

Data from this research will be kept for one year after the submission of the final draft. Once the year has passed and the defence takes place, the data will be deleted from the voice recorder, the USB, the personal drive at UPEI and the home computer.

Validity and Reliability

Validity

Gibbs describes qualitative validity as meaning “that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures” (as cited in Creswell, 2003, p. 190). The procedures that I used in ensuring validity was checking and rechecking the transcripts to ensure no obvious mistakes. The next step was cross checking the common themes against each data source to ensure the common broad themes were justifiable. Creswell (2003) refers to this as triangulation (p. 191). The last thing I did was engaged in informal one-on-one, undocumented conversations with 3 of the participants and disclosed my thoughts around the common broad themes to see if they had any additional comments toward my findings. Each felt the common themes were accurate reflections of the information each provided. This last step is known as “member checking” (Creswell, 2003, p. 191).

Reliability

Surveys, focus groups and reflection question responses can only be as reliable as the person providing the responses. I chose an appropriate sample size for the type of research methods being used and I performed a very rigorous review of my data. My participants were

living the experience I was investigating; therefore, these 10 participants were most fitting for my research objectives.

Limitations

Some limitations faced during this research were the time constraints of a semester and the placement of students internationally. Students tend to communicate less with their home school while they are abroad and once the semester ends, students usually disappear from campus which made it difficult to conduct the re-entry focus group session. Another limitation involves the development of global citizenship characteristics. This is a long-term process and cannot be fully reflected through a very short international experiential learning period. Another potential limitation was that I was not only the primary researcher but I was also the Coordinator of the International Exchange Program at UPEI. This meant that I dealt with the 5 International Exchange participants directly in all aspects of their time abroad. I helped them with their application process, their logistics, and played a part in ensuring their credit transfers. Initially, I thought this dual role might have an impact on their responses to some of my questions, but in the end, it did not. Each student was eager to participate and took part in the entire process from beginning to end.

Summary

In this chapter, the research methodology and data analyses were explained. The research methodology involved gathering data from two groups of students through four focus group sessions and guided reflection questions. The data were collected using a voice recorder or using electronic submissions. The data were analysed through open coding and thematic

analysis. Four broad themes were identified. These themes along with more in-depth review of the findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter IV: Findings

“To see once is better than to hear one hundred times”

~Unknown~

This chapter starts with descriptive details of each participant who took part in this study while maintaining anonymity. The demographic information of each participant is important in this study as it helped me gain a deeper understanding of her/his personal motivation and gain from the international experiential experiences. Each student had a unique experience and it was integral for me to understand the individual participants and their background in order to achieve a deeper understanding of how personal history, program selection, length of overseas, and the purpose of IEL impact the development of global citizenship of each individual. This chapter starts with the participants' demographic profiles and presents the findings obtained through three stages of their International Experiential Learning: pre-departure, experiences overseas, and post-IEL.

Demographic Profiles

A total of 10 students took part in this study. All 10 were Caucasian, between the ages of 19 and 36, with the majority being females between the age of 19 and 25 (70%). The majority of the participants were also born in Prince Edward Island (70%). The breakdown of the participant profiles is as follows:

Participant Overview:

5 Bilateral Exchange students:

- Two Caucasian females between 19 and 25 born in PEI.

- One Caucasian male between 19 and 25 born in PEI.
- Two Caucasian females between 19 and 25 born outside of PEI.

5 Bachelor of Education students:

- Two Caucasian females between 19 and 25 born in PEI.
- One Caucasian female between 19 and 25 born outside of PEI.
- One Caucasian female between 26 and 30 born in PEI.
- One Caucasian female over the age of 36 born in PEI.

Anonymity and confidentiality was assured by assigning each of the students a letter instead of using their real names for identification purposes, (i.e., the 10 students involved were labelled Students A through J).

Student A

Student A is a fourth year business major and French minor who speaks only English between the age of 19 and 25. He has had previous international experience in the form of a student trip to Scotland for ten days in high school. He does not consider himself to be a global citizen, but feels he is prepared for his international experiential learning opportunity thanks to his program advisor, his faculty and the staff at the University of Prince Edward Island. Student A is bound for the Dublin Institute of Technology in Dublin, Ireland to study business in English for four months, or one academic semester.

Student B

Student B is a third year political science major who speaks several languages (Serbian, English, French and Spanish). She considers herself to be a global citizen and has had previous international experience in the form of a family visit to Serbia for four weeks. Student B feels she has been prepared for the IEL through course work and her family and friends. She is going to spend her spring academic semester studying at the Universidad de Vigo in Vigo, Spain. The courses she will take will be in the native Spanish language.

Student C

Student C is a second year student studying business who speaks only English. She considers herself to be a global citizen and has had previous international experience in the form of an educational trip to England for two weeks and an educational trip to Belgium for two weeks in high school. She feels she has been prepared for the IEL through her course work, attendance at information sessions and with the help of her family and friends. Student C is going to the Universidad de Colima in Colima, Mexico for six months of language training followed by the fall semester studying business courses in Spanish at the Manzanillo Campus of the university. She will be spending a full year abroad under this program. This is a special project with funding from the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). This project was designed in 2010 through a competitive proposal writing process and submitted by the UPEI School of Business to the International Academic Mobility (IAM) program run by HRSDC. The funds are provided to help support the travel and living costs for students studying at one of our partner schools in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) area.

Student D

Student D is a third year French and business major who speaks English and French. She considers herself to be a global citizen, but has not had any previous international experience. She feels she is prepared for the IEL because of her course work, attendance at information sessions, and meetings with her program advisor, her faculty and the staff at UPEI. Student D is going to La Rochelle, France to study business in French at the École du Superior Commerce (ESC), La Rochelle Campus. Student D was provided with funding to support her travel and living costs to La Rochelle through a Strategic Initiative Fund that was awarded to the School of Business in 2010 through an internal proposal submitted to the Vice President Academic's office.

Student E

Student E is a second year student with no declared major, but intends to work toward a language minor and major. She currently speaks several languages such as English, French and Spanish and considers herself to be a global citizen. She has had previous international experiences in the form of living abroad in the Bahamas with her family and taking family vacations to France, Spain and the USA. Student E feels she is been prepared for the IEL because of her course work, her attendance at information sessions, her family and friends, as well as her program advisor, her faculty and the staff at UPEI. She also contributes her level of preparedness to her own research on the location and school she is attending.

Student F

Student F is a second year Bachelor of Education student in the Specialization in Indigenous Education stream. Her previous major is in English and she is bilingual in English and French. She considers herself to be a global citizen and has had previous international experience in the form of a one week vacation to Cuba on two separate occasions and a one week vacation to the Dominican Republic. Student F feels she has been prepared for the IEL because of her department information sessions, her family and friends, and thanks to her program advisor, her faculty and the staff. She has also conducted her own research on the school and location. She is heading to a Maori School in New Zealand to teach for her final mandatory six week practicum placement.

Student G

Student G is a second year Bachelor of Education student in the Specialization in Indigenous Education stream. Her previous majors were in sociology and English. Student G speaks English and considers herself to be a global citizen. She has had previous international experience in the form of three weeks in Romania interacting with local residents and vacationing. She feels she has been prepared for the IEL because of her course work, her family and friends, and her program advisor, faculty and staff. Student G is spending her final practicum placement at a Maori school in New Zealand.

Student H

Student H is a second year Bachelor of Education student in the Specialization in International Education stream. Her previous majors were in anatomy and cell biology. Student H speaks English and does not consider herself to be a global citizen. She has not had any

previous international experience. She feels she is prepared for the IEL because of her course work, the information sessions, her family and friends, and her program advisor, faculty and staff. Student H is spending her final six week mandatory practicum placement in Sweden.

Student I

Student I is a second year Bachelor of Education student in the Specialization in International Education stream. Her previous majors were in mathematics and human rights. She speaks English and considers herself to be a global citizen. She has had previous international experience in the form of five days in Greece and five days in Hawaii vacationing. She feels she is prepared for the IEL because of her course work, the information sessions, her program advisor, faculty and staff, and her personal research conducted on the school and location. Student I is going to Costa Rica for her final six week mandatory practicum placement.

Student J

Student J is a second year Bachelor of Education student in the Specialization in International Education stream. Her previous major was in psychology. She speaks English and considers herself to be a global citizen. Student J has had previous international experience in the form of one year in South Korea and South East Asian teaching English as a second language and traveling, three months in Australia traveling and two weeks in Italy and Greece traveling. Student J feels she is prepared for the IEL because of her course work, the information sessions, her program advisor, faculty and staff, and her past travel and cultural experiences.

Why Students Participate in IEL?

The first question asked was why each student chose to take part in the IEL. The majority of the Bilateral Exchange students said it was for reasons related to their academics.

For example, Student A said he was taking the Specialization in International Business, so he thought this would be “a good way to get his feet wet.” Students B, C and D all said their reason for taking part was to improve their second language skills. Student E said her reasons were more personal with a focus on cultural awareness. She said she was really intrigued by the opportunity and wanted to “experience international things.”

The Bachelor of Education students all have a mandatory final practicum placement. Three of the 5 participants chose the international specialization stream, which required an international placement. The 2 students in the indigenous specialization stream had the opportunity to go to Northern Canada or international and they chose international. All 5 students chose the specialization streams because they wanted to travel, but the majority thought they would learn something in their international placement that they could bring back and share with students in their future career placements.

Students were asked why they chose the particular location or school. For the most part the decision again, came back to academics and primarily language acquisition; however there were other minor influences. For example, Student A chose his location due to a strong family history and ancestry. Two of the 5 students chose their location based on funding availability. UPEI had two programs offering support to students attending particular locations and for these 2 students; this is what solidified their decision on location and school. There was a lot of discussion about limited programs and opportunities. Two students stressed there was limited opportunities available within the arts faculty. One student wanted to work on her French major but due to the lack of available options in France, she had to study business in French to make it work with her degree. Being in the indigenous specialization stream, Students F and G only had two places to choose from internationally; Sweden and New Zealand. Student G chose New

Zealand because she had already visited Sweden for vacation. Student F chose New Zealand based on personal reasons. She explains, “The effect that winter has on me and especially where I was in my life right then, I knew that being in a cold climate and darker climate would not have a good effect on my mental health.” Students H, I and J had other intentions when signing up for the program. Each had listed Kenya as a first choice but due to elections within the country there was political unrest and all student travel to Kenya was cancelled. These 3 students kept very open minds and decided on their locations after in depth conversations with their program advisor.

Students' Expectations for IEL

When sharing their thoughts on the impact of the international learning experience on their personal lives, career and identity, the majority of the students seemed to think the largest impact would be on her/his personal life. One student had a major focus on the professional or career development. His main concern was to meet new people and make networking contacts for his future. While another student felt it would help her “narrow down a career path.” The majority of the students talked about independence and personal growth. As one student stated, she was eager “to be self-sufficient, to be independent, to gain life experience, to build confidence and to learn about herself.” Another student agreed with this and felt this experience was an excellent opportunity to see if he could “make it on his own.” Three more students also discussed looking forward to gaining confidence and as Student I stated, she is looking forward to gaining a “wider breadth of knowledge from this experience than I would if I hadn’t taken the specialization.” Another student also mentioned she felt she would gather “a better understanding of people from another culture.” Student G agreed and said that she:

just wanted to have a more diverse background as opposed to just teaching in PEI where everybody is basically white and basically Catholic or Protestant, so I just wanted to have a little more knowledge and a bit more exposure to different cultures and different education systems.

The overall expectation from their time involved in the IEL is to experience a challenge and have a great time. When asked if each they felt prepared for the experience, more than half said yes. One student said she didn't know and another said she felt prepared but was concerned about the amount of uncertainty due to the "lack of information provided to her by the partner school." She did say that she was prepared for the uncertainty and the challenge that lie ahead. This particular student faced endless issues around paperwork, trouble with documents and was still waiting for her visa and passport to arrive the day prior to her departure. The interesting part is that 2 students were to attend the same partner school and one student's experience leading up to departure was flawless, while the one mentioned above was very stressful. All of the Bilateral Exchange students said that the UPEI International Relations Office was very efficient and helpful in the preparation process.

Three of the Specialization in Education students all felt extremely prepared for the experience and each of them contributed this to the internationally focussed courses they took. Each of the 3 students had taken Educating for Global Citizenship and International Education. They all stressed the impact that these two courses had on their preparedness in such ways as the pedagogy and cultural expectations. They also contributed this to "the international meetings on safety talks and culture shock." The 2 students in the Indigenous stream of the Specialization in Education did not take these two international courses but did attend the information sessions.

Being in the Indigenous Education stream, they took courses more directly focussed on the issues related to teaching in Indigenous communities.

The Meaning of Global Citizenship for Participants of IEL

Out of the 10 students, only 3 had a solid understanding of what it meant to be a global citizen. Three felt they may have heard the term before but couldn't define it, one had never heard the term before, and the remaining 3 thought it had something to do with the traveling to or living in other countries. They also used phrases like "borderless, environmental issues, tolerance and acceptance of other cultures." I was asked if I had a definition so read a few different definitions to the group and then asked them what impact this experience might have on their global perspective. All 10 felt it would help them see the similarities and/or differences between the new culture and their own culture. Adaptation was a key term used during this part of the discussion. As one student explained:

in our little corner of the world, everyone just revolves around the English language and western culture so it will just be interesting to hear different languages and being used to how people see things differently in different parts of the world.

One student was excited to see things first hand as opposed to reading about his destination in the media. Although he didn't initially know a specific definition to global citizenship, after some group discussion he felt that tolerance and acceptance play a big part in developing global citizenship characteristics. During the first focus group, Student B felt that being a global citizen was to be accepting and to "treat all people equally."

During the first focus group, Student C said she felt like she was a global citizen but in a “sheltered kind of way.” She felt her parents were always there to help guide her so she never really had the opportunity to experience “hands on global citizenship.”

During the first focus group Students D and E felt global citizenship to mean “not seeing borders” or that there “shouldn’t be a divide between countries.”

Even though Student F did not take any of the international courses, she had a somewhat clear understanding of global citizenship prior to departure. She initially felt that teaching about global citizenship was part of being a global citizen.

Student G had not heard of the term before leaving and upon return, she said she was still confused as to what it meant. She asked, “Does it mean that I belong to the planet”?

Student H felt the internationally focussed courses she took were extremely interesting and directly contributed to her knowledge of global citizenship. She even developed a large resource binder on global citizenship to use in her future teaching career. She felt global citizenship is “something to be lived and acted every day. It’s not just one lesson or one unit; I think it is something that should be incorporated into the general awareness as well as an understanding and appreciation of the cultures of the world and your place in it.”

Student I didn’t contribute to this particular question during the first focus group but upon return she talked about the difference between being in a country as a tourist and actually living in a different country. She felt global citizenship was about “learning the culture, taking part in the culture and traveling the country to see more of the culture in depth.”

To Student J, global citizenship means “being aware of everyone around you and being aware of difference and not only accepting but embracing every culture and understanding people even if they have different beliefs.”

Students were asked what impact this IEL might have on their development as global citizens the discussion flowed around the first-hand knowledge of another culture. The students were most enthused about building their intercultural competencies. They discussed how seeing things in the media is one thing but learning for yourself first-hand about the culture, the politics, the religions and the educational system is most intriguing.

When asked if they thought developing global citizenship characteristics was an important outcome of this IEL opportunity, they all said yes and the reasons for the importance were stated in such phrases as, “developing tolerance leads to a more accepting world” and “developing these characteristics is just an unconscious thing that you will gain and kind of adopt while you are away and when you come back, you bring it back with you.” Students C and E thought it was important but not the most important thing that should come out of the experience. They both felt personal growth should come first.

At the end of this session, when asked if they felt they had developed any global citizenship characteristics in this point of their lives, whether that be through academia, community service or family etc., each of them felt they had some characteristics but all of them were eager to grow and develop further through their IEL opportunity. As Student B clearly stated, “I feel I still have to work on my development and I think through this experience I can only grow more, there is no way I cannot.” Student E said she was in the development process and contributed this to her Spanish professor for teaching her about current situations in Latin America. Student H contributed all of her global citizenship characteristic development to her

Educating for Global Citizenship course, taken as part of her BEd program in the UPEI Faculty of Education. She recounts the class:

I really enjoyed this professor's course because it gave me a different perspective on the world that I haven't thought of before and it is a really neat idea and really applicable to how I want to teach. I think we are not just preparing students to be able to take tests and be able to just know a bunch of things but not just know things but be able to think about things, ask questions about things and just take into account multiple perspectives. To be questioning. I think that is one of the qualities of a global citizen, for me, is to be critical and to critically think about the world and the issues in the world. Not as in criticize but in understanding things. That course really opened my mind to global citizenship and made me want to learn more about it.

This first focus group session with each group was a learning experience for all involved. The discussion indicates that all students are eager to develop their knowledge, skills and cultural competencies during their time abroad. Each student is up for the challenge and extremely excited to experience a new part of the world for the next several months.

Participants' Learning Experiences Overseas

Participants were asked to answer reflective questions during their time abroad as a way for them to think about their experiences. Bachelor of Education students are required to do these reflections as part of their practicum but the Bilateral Exchange students have not been required to do this in the past. The same set of questions was provided to all students. (See Appendix E)

Initial Experiences and First Impressions

The majority of responses to the question around how students felt upon first arriving to their host country revolved around feeling overwhelmed, anxious, nervous, frustrated, exhausted etc. For the most part, these feelings came out of the language barrier. These are classic examples of feelings from culture shock (Brown and Holloway, 2008). The students who were in countries such as Spain, Mexico and France really felt the frustration of the language barrier right away. Students who were in Sweden, New Zealand and Ireland did not experience as much of an impact in terms of language barrier. Although the students who were in New Zealand felt it more when they first entered their school to start the practicum as these Maori students are taught in their mother tongue. The 5 Bachelor of Education students were so impressed with the friendliness of the people who greeted them at the airport and showed them around. Student H spent her practicum in Sweden. She and her classmate were met at the airport by a colleague who took them to her home for dinner. This was a great way for them to settle in. As Student H stated, “It made me feel very at home and that things were not so different in Sweden. If I can have roast and potato leftovers here, I can belong”!

Students F and G also had an excellent arrival experience. The principal of the host school picked them up and showed them around. The friendliness of New Zealanders was the biggest highlight for these 2 students. Student G discussed the principal’s passion for his school and his job and commented that she “hasn’t seen a school comparable to this at home, but there should be.” Student F observed a Maori immersion mixed class of grades three and four students. She felt anxious at first due to the age group and the language barrier but also felt the “classroom seemed pretty typical and she felt at home.”

Another common element that emerged from this reflection question was the urge to explore and take in the scenic beauty of their new surroundings. Students were very passionate about the need to immerse themselves into the new culture.

Understanding Cultural Differences and Similarities

Some developments started to emerge during the third month of the Bilateral Exchange student's time abroad, while developments for the Bachelor of Education students started to emerge during their fifth and sixth weeks abroad. For example, one commonality that emerged from both groups in their reflections was noticing the similarities as opposed to the differences. One student said that being abroad allowed her to "open her eyes to the fact that while there are notable differences, there are a lot more similarities" between her culture and the culture of her host country. Two more common terms that emerged were "personal growth" and "knowledge sharing." Students felt they grew as individuals, whether that be through "independence", "open-mindedness", "awareness", "tolerance" and/or "acceptance" of themselves and/or other cultures. Students were also eager to return and share their experiences with others, whether that be through "presentations", "incorporating what they learned into their classrooms as teachers", or "sharing with family and friends."

When the reflections from the second question started to come in, the common terms that started to be displayed were words such as "cultural similarities", "cultural differences", "educational differences" and "friendliness." Students seemed to be settling in and taking a deeper notice to their new surroundings. There was a clear divide between the responses from the students in regard to similarities and differences. For example, Student A stated that, "much like PEI, the locals were willing to lend a hand in helping me find where I needed to go." Student A was attending an English speaking business school in Dublin but still seemed to

experience a barrier in the language due to the strong Irish accent. He expressed that for the most part “the relationships with peers are very similar to those back home with the exception of the struggles with the thick accent barriers.” He also said there were a lot of similarities inside the classroom between his host school and UPEI in that the professors and students are on a first name basis and are “extremely approachable.” Student E commented on the student to teach and student to student relationship; “I have yet to see very many large differences in the relationships that are in Canada and here in Spain . . .” This was interesting because Student B attended the same institution as Student E and had a very different answer to the same question. Student B felt the general population in Spain were “very nice and eager to help” but that “the professors at the university are not at all at the students’ disposal.” She also compared the student to student relationships by saying:

The relationships between students are very good. In fact, I had spoken to many Spanish students in class and they were very interested in talking to me and always complimented me on my Spanish. If I did not understand something that the professor had said and asked a Spanish student to explain, they always did it without hesitation. With respect to group work, they do not exclude anyone and are very friendly when working together. I can go as far as to say that I had hung out with some people from my class because they are very fun and always make you feel a part of their circle, unlike in Canada.

Student C had this to say when comparing her classes in Canada to her classes in Mexico:

I’ve taken many classes at UPEI where I never once raised my hand to ask a question, never once spoke to the teacher in or outside of class, and never once engaged with a fellow classmate. Everything is different here. I participate in

class, I communicate with my teachers, and my classmate and I help each other. I know this experience will have a profound influence on the rest of my education.

Student D commented on the student to teacher and student to student relationships by first discussing how different the student to student relationships were because all students take all of the same classes together. She said “bonds become very strong and I notice the clearly defined cliques in my class.” She then went on to say that the teacher to student relationship “was difficult to get used to because it is exactly the same as high school...the students are as rambunctious and as disobedient as my high school classmates were.” She felt it was an adjustment but sincerely preferred the educational system in Canada more.

Students H and J were both on their practicum in Sweden in a remote village outside of Varberg but were thoroughly impressed by the advanced technology in the classroom. All students have access to smart phones, ipods and their own Mac computers. Apparently this was new as of the current academic year. Grades six through grade nine students were given a MacBook for use at school. Student J was extremely enthused about the skills she was learning and the new teaching tools that she would be able to bring back to the classroom in PEI. She commented that “in my previous practicum placements in PEI, my classroom did not have a smart board, or even a computer projector, so I mostly relied on the old-fashioned overheads.” She was finally able to put to use the technologies she learned throughout the Bachelor of Education program at UPEI, not to mention all the new tools and skills she was learning. The English levels of the students they were teaching were excellent. Student J commented that “some of them even have more extensive vocabularies than my own.” Student H commented on the importance of second language acquisition by saying:

I actually think it is better for children to have to learn another language if not more than one. I almost feel arrogant and that I am able to only know one language and that it is so acceptable in our country to teach one language only. The students here know from the very beginning that they have to learn English if they want to do anything in life so that is one major difference.

In contrast to Student J's perspective on the advance technologies and teaching styles in Sweden, Student I who was in Costa Rica had the opposite experience. She noted that students in her school did a lot more note taking and book work. She felt the teaching was "very traditional" and that "learning was achieved through memorization rather than discovery or investigation."

When looking at the different school systems and teaching styles in the different countries one starts to assume the differences are reflected in the development stages of the particular countries. Does this mean that Sweden is more developed educationally than Canada? Student I also observed that her students "are not engaged and are not understanding the material" through traditional teaching methods.

Students F and G were both teaching Maori students in New Zealand. They had the opportunity to teach all different levels of students. The biggest difference both students experienced was the fact that there were "little to no diagnosed cases of ADD/ADHD." They both also commented on the lack of electronics. Students "do not have cell phones and do not bring electronic games to school." Students from grade three onward are assessed with tests, which seems like traditional teach but students are also privileged in "spending more time outdoors", students are "allowed to sit on the floor", and teachers spend a lot of time teaching through "games, play and songs." Students F and G also commented on how impressed they both were by the "sense of cultural pride that the teachers instil in the students." The Maori

culture is kept honoured and validated within the classroom, something they would both like to see happen in Canada with the Indigenous cultures.

Cross-cultural Understanding and Skill Development

Students were asked how each one felt their own cross-cultural understandings evolved during their IEL. This is where development started to show in comparison with the weeks/month prior. Four of the 5 Bilateral Exchange students felt they really evolved by becoming more open-minded, aware and accepting of their new cultures and the cultures of others they met. Student B claimed she already had a “good understanding and tolerance of cultural differences” because she grew up surrounded by different cultures, so she did not feel she had much evolving to do. Student E said she “no longer just has a preconceived idea of what people from different cultures are like.” She went on to say that “each person is an individual in their own unique way.” She also noted that “in order to understand a culture (or person) perfectly, you must put yourself in their shoes and look at what circumstances they were brought up in and how this has made them into the person they are now.” Student C felt this IEL opportunity helped her become “more sensitive and respectful in understanding other cultures.” She also pointed out the following:

I think before studying abroad, my reaction to facing differences of any type was to question if it was good or bad. Therefore in comparing my values to others, I would wonder who was right and who was wrong. I think in participating in a study abroad opportunity, I’ve realized that this way of thinking is very narrow and closed-minded.

This was also made apparent in the response to this question provided by Student D. She felt her cross-cultural understandings had evolved to a whole new level since arriving in France. She said:

I have always understood that cultural differences existed, but no matter how much you have learned about, talked about, and thought about cultural differences, there is not really a true understanding until it is experienced – from there you realize that it is more of a feeling than it is a circumstance. Embracing the feeling and using it as an opportunity as opposed to a source of frustration is where a good education on cultural differences comes into play.

Student A also felt he “developed greatly” in the area of cross-cultural understand and he expressed that he was “learning more and more things about their varying cultures and traditions. I also find myself being much more tolerant and patient...I feel like I no longer simply overlook cultural differences, but look to learn more about them and celebrate the differences we all share.”

The Bachelor of Education students commented at length about the similarities they saw as opposed to focussing on the differences. Student F said that her program helped to “reinforce her feeling that although cultures do differ around the world, there are more similarities than differences when it comes to the human race as a whole.” Student H also felt this way and said that the biggest thing she noticed was that “we are all similar. People are people and kids are kids, all over the world.” She also went on to say that “before going on this experience my perspective on the world was pretty limited to my imagination.” This opportunity to teach in Sweden also opened her mind to the importance of learning a second language. She came to

realize the importance of English knowledge and its dominance throughout the world and is struggling to understand how she feels about this.

Student F and G were both surprised to see the similarities between the Maori culture and the Indigenous cultures in Canada. As Student F so profoundly explains:

At the beginning of this practicum, I believed that the school was not a place to teach or practice religious or spiritual beliefs. I now recognize that that was an opinion which was developed based on the Canadian way of life and education system that I have known and automatically accepted. Now, after having been part of a primarily Maori community and a Maori immersion school, I realize that it is not only acceptable, but crucial to teach and practice elements of Maori spirituality at school. Without it, the Maori students here would most likely lose their culture, their language and possibly their identity. I now believe that there should be a place for religion/spirituality in schools in Canada, as long as no one religion or spiritual belief system is portrayed as more important than another and as long as these beliefs/practices do not discriminate or hurt any other person. I now believe it is especially important for Canada's Indigenous people, who have had their culture, language and identity taken away from them, to be able to benefit from having a school that teaches their native languages, practices and beliefs.

Student G supports this by explaining her broader understanding of the Maori culture:

I have also gained a broader understanding that "education" and "culture" do not need to be so separate. When the two are combined, a stronger sense of identity is

apparent in the students. I know I have mentioned this a number of times, but the strong emphasis on culture at this school is amazing to see. Not just because it is an immersion school, but because the sense of identity is so strong in the teachers and the students.

Student I had a very difficult time accepting the differences in teaching styles and pedagogy within her placement in Costa Rica. She expressed the importance of taking her international courses at school and how these courses along with the weekly international meetings reminded her that things would be different, she still had a hard time accepting the differences. The educational system in Costa Rica is behind in their development compared to Canada and she struggled with this. She was especially frustrated that “the administration at [her school] wasn’t especially interested in the learning about the current pedagogy that she learned as a highly trained Canadian teacher.” She was eager to share her knowledge, her culture and her teaching style with her students but felt there was a lack of support or encouragement from her colleagues in allowing this to happen.

International Experiential Learning and its Influences

The final reflection question was focussed around how each student’s international experience influenced her/his self-understanding and personal world view. Student A felt his experience helped him grow personally and learn a lot about himself. He felt he had more patience than he truly realized. He went on to say this:

I now view the world with a more positive outlook in the sense that I know there are very accepting people out there that look past nationality, religion, and other

cultural differences. I am definitely also more accepting of all of these things now as well after all this, which is a really great thing. I am so glad I chose to do this educational experience and the whole thing has changed my life and my views on life. I wouldn't change any of the experience in any way.

Student B expressed how she has developed a more open-mind than ever before in terms of “being accepting and tolerant of different cultures, sexual orientations, food, schedules, and education and also understanding that everyone is different.” Student C expressed a very similar experience around influence and said that she felt “more open-minded toward other cultures and backgrounds...now being able to connect with people that, on the surface, would seem to share very little in common with.” The most important lesson she claims to have learned is that while “people can seem worlds away in their differences, in reality there are very few things that separate human beings.” She also expressed that her “horizons have been expanded in a way that she never would have experienced had she not gone aboard.” She had a most interesting comment to help back up this statement. She said:

I think that the future of our global community would be a lot better off if more students today studied abroad. It's much easier to understand different countries when you travel to them. With more understanding of foreign nations would come less walls and barriers built to divide them; both figuratively and literally.

Student D was extremely impressed with her ability to confidently use her second language and overcome the challenges of living in a different country. She claims her “view of the world has simultaneously shrunk and expanded.” She sees “different parts of the world and the people who live in them to be much more accessible.” Student E now has an open-minded view of the world and feels that “you cannot judge a culture by only a few members and assume that everyone is

like that...each person is still an individual with a different personal experience.” Student E also claims that her international experience has opened more doors for her and she will now spend the summer volunteering in Guatemala. She said “before this experience, I’m not sure I would have had the guts to do this.” She also accredits this experience to helping her “gain a clearer mind on languages and how they will affect her future.” She is doing two minors, one in French and the second in Spanish and feels her options will be endless with the power of language acquisition. Her final statement for this reflection was this: “Of course, I knew that study abroad experience would change me somehow, but I could never imagine like this. I’m very grateful for the experience I have been given, and will remember it for years to come”!

The most common component that emerged out of this last reflection question for the Bachelor of Education students was the personal development. Some commented on the professional development but for the most part it was the open-mind shift that seemed to come to the forefront. Student F expressed that for the first time in her life she felt like the minority upon arrival in her host town/school. She realized how quickly she was able to adapt to her new surroundings. Student G felt this experience has led her to become more focussed on herself and her own life. She also commented on how she as “gained a more open-mind towards other cultures more so than ever before.” She felt her professional development has been given a boost as she reflected on the pride the teachers in her Maori school instil in their students and she really hopes to be able to do the same with her own future students.

Student H experienced real strides in her own personal development. She felt this experience has allowed her to realize her true self. To quote her, she said “I have learned to be ok with being me.” She also went on to say that one of the biggest things that this experience has helped her develop was an “even greater empathy for student learning something new,

particularity a new language.” She knows there will be “ongoing discoveries about herself in the months following this experience.”

Independence was another important component that came out of this final reflection question. Student I realized that she is braver and more independent than she could have imagined. She felt she was always more of a follower but this experience made her into more of a leader. Having had the need to step out of her comfort zone several times during this experience, she really feels she “has grown quite a bit as a person in terms of confidence and independence.” There was true development in her when she reflected upon how this experience has helped her develop as an educator. She said:

I think the most important realization I’ve had during my international teaching experience has been that education is constantly evolving. In many ways, teaching in Costa Rica felt like teaching in the past; the classroom and teaching methods were very traditional in many ways. I had to continuously remind myself that I could not judge the education system here, because it was not very different from our own in recent years. Being in this situation made me realize how important it is as an educator to remind myself that the practices and pedagogy I have learned in the education program are not the best possible practices... they are simply the best in our part of the world at this time.

Student J has had numerous experiences traveling the world in the past and she initially thought that teaching in Sweden for her practicum was not that much different than in Canada but when asked to reflect upon this international experience and how she thought it influences her understanding of herself personally and as an educator she had this to say:

I learned that I am a pretty open person, which is something that I always kind of knew, however it seemed to be a bit more evident to me this time around. . I feel like much less of a “global citizen” here than my students in grade seven, who study four languages, have traveled the world, and know lots about other cultures. If anything, I am now highly motivated to learn another language, and travel more to learn about other places. I really do admire how global perspectives are valued in this country. I would love to reflect these values in my own classroom in the future and pass on all of my own global knowledge to my students in any country I may find myself teaching in.

Post IEL Focus Groups

Using the same set of questions as the pre-departure focus groups, the return sessions were very informative. Only 7 students were able to be in attendance but the remaining 3 sent their responses electronically.

The Meaning of Global Citizenship for Participants of IEL

When asked the question around the meaning of global citizenship during the return focus group sessions, most responses remained unchanged. Student A couldn't attend the return focus group in person so he sent me his responses to the questions electronically. They were virtually the same as before he left. He felt global citizenship meant someone that is “open and accepting of new cultures.” He went on to explain that he felt “they are not only open of these [cultures], but wish to participate and try these new cultures and see the differences first hand. A global citizen is not judge-mental of a certain culture or cultural practice. Global citizens are also aware of differing issues and perspectives between different cultures.”

Student B seemed to have a better grasp on the meaning of global citizenship prior to departure than when she returned. Upon return, when asked the same question, she felt it was about “respecting your own citizenship in your country and then the citizenship of other countries.” I think this was because of the larger discussion in the first focus group. The second focus group for the Bilateral Exchange students had only 2 participants due to limitations around finding a convenient time for all involved.

A major development was with Student C. She had heard of the term global citizen before but didn’t really have a clear definition in mind. Student C was not able to attend the return focus group in person. She sent me her responses electronically and the response she gave to me to the question, “What does global citizenship mean to you?” astounded me. Here is an excerpt from her answer:

In my opinion, global citizenship means being aware of and engaged in what’s going on in the world at a local, national, and international level. This means for people to set aside barriers and to work together on many community stages. Human rights, criminal law, economic and political security, active democracy, safe health care, accessible education, technology advancement, environmental sustainability, as well as social development and cultural protection are examples of issues that are affecting people around the globe regardless of their national identity. People of all walks of life need to broaden their understandings of global issues and diversity, while actively participating in challenging existing systems in hopes of changing the world for the betterment of all.

Student D also showed development from before and after her experience. During the return focus group she said,

I guess global citizenship means identifying with other cultures. Being able to relate to them and being able to see the capacity within yourself to have those same beliefs and attitudes. Considering other peoples points of view whenever you make decisions and not just a Canadian point of view but that there are other people of the world that you need to consider and other cultures that you could look through their eyes and see things completely differently but understand it and consider that when making key decisions.

Student E also had a limited understanding of global citizenship during the first focus group. Upon return, the answer she provided to the question, “What does global citizenship mean to you?” she had this to say:

Global citizenship to me is having an understanding of different cultures and different ways of solving issues and accepting that although they may not be what you see as correct, it’s a different way of thinking and a different upbringing that everyone goes through, and so in order to gain knowledge of the way they act currently, you must see the way they were brought up to think and act this way. Often times it is difficult to accept these differences, because it’s hard to walk in their shoes and see as to why they may think this way, but once you can gain a better knowledge it is very rewarding.

Upon return, Student F responded to the same question was a little more detailed. She felt global citizenship means to “be aware and exposing yourself to other places in the world with purpose...seeing what’s out there...and then passing what you learn on to others.”

Student G did not hear of the term before leaving and upon return, she said she was still confused as to what it meant. She asked, “Does it mean that I belong to the planet?”

Student I talked about the difference between being in a country as a tourist and actually living in a different country. She felt global citizenship was about “learning the culture, taking part in the culture and traveling the country to see more of the culture in depth.”

Upon return Student J had made an impressive statement by saying that she felt global citizenship is “just a label on what we should all be doing anyway – being open and aware of the other – of the similarities and difference and facilitating others to understand that as well.”

The other interesting outcome was seeing the development in some students with regard to the definition and not in others. Of the 10 students who took part in the focus groups, 7 indicated a better understanding of global citizenships and 3 did not change their understanding of the term at all. However, they all showed a development in the characteristics associated with global citizenship, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Significance of Learning a Second Language

Of the 10 students who took part in this research, 4 of them were working on learning or improving a second language while abroad. As one student stated, “I participated in international experiential learning because my main goal was to learn Spanish and, luckily I got an opportunity to go to Spain to do that. In my opinion there is no better way to learn a language than to be integrated into the culture and the country in which they speak that language.” She went on to discuss how quickly she picked up the language and how you can attend classes at home to learn a little over a long period of

time, or you could go abroad and learn a lot in a short amount of time. As another student stated,

My international experience basically contributed so much to my life. Not only did I learn another language, I got to live in Spain and experienced their culture and learned a lot of things about their lifestyle their politics, basically how things work over there and, I think it really made me grow as a person being able to live on my own and fend for myself and just kind of live totally different lifestyle than I would be living here.

This particular student came back home and started to teach other students Spanish dances in her spare time. She was sharing the culture she learned with others as a way of keeping what she experienced fresh in her mind.

Effective Strategies of Preparedness for IEL

Although the majority of the participants felt they were prepared for their IEL, 2 of the 10 said they would have liked to have taken an internationally focussed education course. Five of the 10 were extremely happy with the mandatory pre-departure sessions initiated by the Faculty of Education and 5 of the 10 were happy with the pre-departure session put on by the International Relations Office. It might be important to note that this particular session was not mandatory but all 5 Bilateral Exchange students attended. Student I had a very important suggestion,

The only thing I would say is that it was very presumptuous to assume that we are going into a country and assuming that everyone can communicate with us. We put so much responsibility on them to try to communicate with us in English. We didn't attempt to learn any Spanish and I think that is a pretty presumptuous thing to do; to expect

everyone else to have to work to communicate with you. I think if you are to become a global citizen, I think part of that should be attempting to learn more languages and I think it's important that we make an effort and not expect other people to learn English. So I would suggest, even if it wasn't a course, just encouraging the people who will be traveling to pick up on or try learning the basics of the language they are going to be immersed in. That was the one thing I wish we had been told, was that it would be really helpful, even just courteous to learn a little Spanish.

Another extremely important suggestion in terms of preparedness came from Student G. This student suggested the following,

It might be a good idea to have a person there [at the host location], so that if someone is going there, one of the teachers could be available to email back and forth sort of as a buddy program, I guess. Have someone there that students can contact with any kind of question. I sort of went there blind, you know what I mean, so I think it would actually be good that they have someone that they could actually touch base with and ask any question that they might have.

IEL and the Impact on Employment Opportunities

Of the 10 students involved in this research, 5 know that their career path is in education, hence their Bachelor of Education degree. The 5 Bilateral Exchange students come from various backgrounds and degrees and do not have a specific career path at the time of these interviews. For example, Student B felt there was not a lot of opportunity, career wise, in Spanish in Prince Edward Island. This particular student is aiming for a career in politics and adding Spanish to

her list of three other languages already spoken she felt it might provide her with the extra tool to succeed in the world of political studies.

Student D has contributed her IEL directly to her new career opportunity. She had this to say,

Career wise it really affected me just coming back and being able to apply for a job opportunity right off the bat. I got the job because I went to France and because I had that experience and got a lot of experience speaking French fluently. I was recently interviewed for a job in French and got the job and so my experience directly affected that. The job is the communications coordinator and francophone member relations for the early childhood development association. It is permanent full-time and so I am all set! So, yes, my career was directly affected.

Student C felt that her career direction had certainly changed. She had no set career path and was dabbling in journalism and trying all sorts of different initiatives on the side while studying but did not have a definite direction in mind. She stated,

With regards to experiential learning and the impact it's had on my career goals, I'm hoping that my future career will give me opportunities to travel. A career which offers prospects to permanently relocate abroad would be ideal for me. I've never been more convinced that an expatriate life will be my future.

Student E also had a slight shift in career paths. This student stated, "In regards to my career, I feel that I will sought out more options and ways of getting involved with international careers." Before she returned from her IEL, she was applying for other international opportunities. She spent the summer after her IEL in Guatemala working with other students in

the international development arena. Since returning to UPEI, she has become one of the most active members of the World University Services of Canada (WUSC) on campus and continues to promote international opportunities while sharing her own experiences with fellow students.

Participant Overall Feedback on IEL

Of the 10 participants in this study all of them had an excellent experience and said they would recommend it to fellow students. When asked why they would recommend an IEL to others, they used phrases like, “it opens your mind”, “you develop other skills that you can’t develop at home, like new culture and another language”, and “you meet amazing people.” One student said, “It was just such a huge learning experience and I just can’t put into words just how wonderful it was!” Another student commented on the friendships she made,

I think everyone should travel if they get a chance and do interesting things if they get a chance within their program. Even before we started in May we were getting to know each other the whole eight months prior to leaving. We were together, we were fundraising together, learning about the world together, learning about each other’s host countries. Although we were only going to one, we were learning about other’s destinations as well. It was just a really good experience. It’s just a good network. Everything was just really good!

Another student thought it was a great way to step outside of the normal routine at school and in life. She said she would, “recommend it because sometimes we get caught in our own little bubble and our own little routine and I think it kind of forces you to be a more positive person and a better person or better teacher for sure, and to be more open minded.”

The comments from the students kept coming back to “becoming more open-minded.” Three of the 10 students said they would recommend it to others because it is a way to learn more. Student I said, “If I had stayed here, I would have just been doing the same thing again, whereas this is putting me out of my comfort zone and you learn so much more that way. So I think once you have already done three practicum locally, to do a fourth internationally is much more of a learning opportunity than to stay here.” Student G agreed with this statement and added,

I think it was just such a great opportunity to do something different and, because like what [Student I] was saying, we had three of the same things here and then to have the experience of challenging yourself in something completely different, something that you might not be the most comfortable with, well I guess I learned a lot about myself during it and I think that’s a big part too and I’m going to be grateful for that for the rest of my life.

Student E felt that everybody could “take something from an international experience such as this and it will forever change their lives.” Student A had many reasons to recommend an IEL to others and had this to say,

I would definitely recommend other students to take part in this global learning experience. I had the best time of my life. Meeting new people, travelling through Ireland, the UK and parts of Western Europe were absolutely amazing. Even just sitting down in class and doing group work with the Irish students and interacting with them academic-wise was different and exciting at the same time. There are so many amazing adventures and people you would be missing out on by not going or participating as

much as possible in this program. Everything is so much different over there, but at the same time, there are so many similarities present as well!

Student C agreed and was eager to promote her experience and help with recruitment efforts to help increase the number of students taking part in IEL. When asked if she would recommend an IEL, she said,

Without any reservations, I would highly recommend other students to take part in international experiential learning. I've already encouraged my brothers, friends, former coworkers, etc., about studying abroad. I'll gladly speak to any student who shows an interest in going abroad about where to find more information and the kind of resources that are available to support them.

It is encouraging to find that 100% of the students who took part in this research are keen to recommend IEL to other students and even more encouraging to hear that they are willing to spread the word to others in the form of presentations, question and answers and as a reference point of contact for others. Since this research took place, 4 of the 10 participants made themselves available to help promote IEL to students.

Key Themes

Once all of the data had been collected, transcribed, read and analyzed, several common themes emerged:

Theme 1 – Misunderstanding and understanding of “global citizenship”

Theme 2 – Personal and academic reasons for choosing IEL

Theme 3 – The importance of international experiential learning

Theme 4 – Limitations to international opportunities

These common themes continued to emerge in each of the four focus group sessions as well as within the reflection questions. The themes will be discussed in further detail under each research method below and in even more detail in the next chapter.

Misunderstanding and Understanding of “Global Citizenship”

The term global citizen is used in the University of Prince Edward Island’s future directions plan under the pillar entitled, Living Sustainability. It states,

UPEI strives to provide students, faculty, and staff with a unique immersion into a learning environment whereby sustainability grows from a conceptual to a cultural level. We aim to demonstrate “living and embracing sustainability” in our research, operations, and daily activities in a consistent and forward-looking manner. By doing so, we will encourage and inspire members of our campus community to become more knowledgeable and better equipped global citizens capable of making a difference locally and globally.

This is an excellent mission and vision for our university community. Unfortunately, it seems there is little being done to help students understand what it really means to be a global citizen. None of the 5 Bilateral Exchange students had a clear understanding of what it meant to be a global citizen. Their present understanding ranged from the number of stamps in their passport to being a citizen with no specific home. Some expressed that they had heard the term before “by words, not by definition.”

Three of the 5 Bachelor of Education students had a pretty solid understanding of what it meant to be a global citizen. One student had somewhat of an understanding while one student had no comprehension of the term. The reason behind this became clear when it was revealed that 3 of the 5 students were the only ones to have taken the course “Educating for Global

Citizenship” and “International Education.” These 3 students were enrolled in the Specialization in International Education so it was a requirement to take these particular courses. The remaining 2 were enrolled in the Specialization in Indigenous Education so it was not mandatory or a priority for them to take these two courses. This begs the question of whether or not we are doing enough to educate our students on what it actually means to be a global citizen.

Personal and Academic Reasons for Choosing IEL

All 5 Bilateral Exchange students indicated that their choice for going abroad was to develop personally or academically. One student chose this IEL route in hopes of making future network connections for professional reasons. Four of the 5 were using this opportunity to work on a second language. All 5 were hoping to be challenged and were hoping to find their sense of independence.

Because it is mandatory for the Bachelor of Education students to conduct a practicum at the end of their final semester, the common theme that emerged from the question of why they chose to go abroad was for the “practical application” of the knowledge they gained. These 5 students also used phrases like “travel”, “cultural experience”, “firsthand experience”, “knowledge sharing” and “differentiating” themselves. Similar to the responses from the Bilateral Exchange students, these students also commented on the personal aspect with words like “challenge”, “growth”, “independence” and “confidence” for the reasons behind their decision in choosing this IEL opportunity.

The Importance of International Experiential Learning

All 5 Bilateral Exchange students felt this form of education was extremely important, especially in today’s shrinking world. This was obvious; otherwise they wouldn’t have chosen

to take part. The reasons behind why they felt it was important ranged from “differentiating themselves”, as there are so few students that do go abroad, to “seeing the world first hand.” All were equally excited about their upcoming experience. Three students expressed how keen they were to take their experiences home to share with other students. After reading and discussing different definitions on global citizenship to the group of 5, each felt this upcoming international experiential learning opportunity would have a great impact on their development as global citizens. One student commented on how it would lead to a more “acceptable and tolerant society” one student at a time.

The Bachelor of Education students all felt it was extremely important to take part in this experience abroad and their expectations were all relatively professional. They used phrases like, “skills development”, “cultural learning”, and “professional growth.” Three of the students commented on improving their EAL teaching practices and one student was eager to learn to teach “with a lot less” tools and resources. All 5 were looking forward to learning from their host schools and students. It didn’t seem to be about what they could teach to their hosts, but more about what they could learn from their hosts and take back to share in Island schools.

Limitations of Experiential Learning

Four of the 5 Bilateral Exchange students discussed the limitations of program offerings within their departments. Two of these 4 had better offerings as they were majoring in business and could use their minor to study at one of the partner business schools. For example, one student studied her business courses in French and used this toward her French minor. The other student studied intense Spanish language at our partner school before studying her business courses in Spanish. The other 2 were arts students and they expressed the major limits to offerings within that faculty. This is a valid concern. Both of these students focussed on the

language acquisition in their host country and these courses were used toward their modern language major/minor at UPEI. The business students have much more opportunities in terms of locations and partnerships, so the final business major did not face any limitation issues.

Of the 5 Bachelor of Education students that I spoke with, 3 of them were not attending their first choice in terms of location. These 3 originally chose Kenya as their destination preference but due to the turmoil in this country, all travel was put on hold. One of these students had Ethiopia as a backup but this, too became unavailable for reasons not quite clear. Finally this student was placed in Costa Rica and was happy with that decision. The other 2 students who originally chose Kenya were very flexible so they chose Sweden. This seemed like a drastic difference in choice but when they explained their reasoning it was clear. For example, one student claimed that Sweden “was not a country I would choose to travel to on my own”, so this placement made sense for her to do as part of her practicum; she may never visit otherwise. The 2 students in the indigenous specialization claimed that they only had two options to choose from; northern Sweden or New Zealand and both had New Zealand as their top choice of the two.

It is apparent that the offerings for IEL are limited in both programs. This seems to be changing as more and more agreements and memorandums of understanding are being signed allowing more options for students in the coming years.

Summary

This chapter discussed the demographics of the students involved in this research, as well as the findings of the data collected throughout the focus groups and reflection questions. It also discussed the student’s understanding of the term global citizenship; the

reasons for taking part in international experiential learning (IEL); the importance of IEL; the importance of global citizenship; and their opinions around recommending these programs to other students. This chapter combined the before, during and after research collected from the 10 participants in the Bilateral Student Exchange Program, the International Specialization in International Education program and the Specialization in Indigenous Education program. The key themes that emerged from the combined research is discussed in detail.

Chapter V: Conclusion and Recommendations

“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

~Ralph Waldo Emerson~

The purpose of this study was to try to determine to what extent International Experiential Learning opportunities contribute to the development of global citizenship characteristics. As outlined in the previous chapter, this study has shown that of the 10 student participants, all of them displayed some level of enhanced global citizenship characteristics. Each student returned with varying degrees of personal and professional transformation. All participants felt it was an excellent experience and one that each of them would recommend to their peers.

The research was conducted using a case study approach since the students involved were either taking part in a program based International Experiential Learning opportunity or a voluntary bilateral exchange program. Ten students were involved in the research; 5 from the Bachelor of Education faculty in which their international placement is a mandatory part of their program and 5 from the student exchange program in which their international exchange semester is voluntary.

Once all of the data had been collected, transcribed, read and analyzed, several common themes emerged:

Theme 1 – Misunderstanding and understanding of “global citizenship”

Theme 2 – Personal and academic reasons for choosing IEL

Theme 3 – The importance of international experiential learning

Theme 4 – Limitations to international opportunities

As stated in Chapter two, there are several different categories of the term global citizen. As cited in Shattle (2009) by Falk and Urry, there are as many as five different categories: (a) Global Cosmopolitans; (b) Global Activists; (c) Global Reformers; (d) Global Managers; and (e) Global Capitalists. The 10 students that took part in this research fall into three of these five categories.

The first category mentioned by Falk and Urry is Global Cosmopolitans – individuals who develop through extensive international travel. Students B and J fall into this category. Both have experienced extensive international travel prior to taking part in their IEL abroad. They are also keen to continue this travel internationally. Student B is taking part in a UPEI facilitated program in Chiloe, Chile. She contributes this involvement to her time abroad and extensive knowledge of the Spanish language. Student J is prepared to teach anywhere in the world. The second category mentioned by Falk and Urry is Global Activists – individuals who campaign for different causes. Students C and E both fall into this category. Since their IEL abroad they have both joined the World University Services of Canada on campus committee. Student E has spent time in Guatemala under this program working with other students. Both students have been fundraising for the Student Refugee Program and are now on their way to Chile to work under a UPEI facilitated project in the Chiloe region of Chile.

Students F, G, H, and I fall under the category of Global Reformers – individuals who advocate accountability for all humanity. Each of these students is an educator and each commented on the importance of education as power. Each of these students is taking back what they learned while abroad and incorporating it into the classroom to share with their future students.

And finally, Students A and D fall under the category of Global Managers – individuals who work for global institutions. While they may not be employed by global institutions yet, they are likely to be in the future. After their time studying business abroad, both expressed an interest in working for some kind of multinational company. Student D found herself employed with the local French organization upon return and contributes this employment to her experience abroad and being able to have the ability to strengthen her knowledge of the French language. Student A is finishing up and entering his final year in the Business program.

In Chapter two, the characteristics of global citizenship are outlined according to Schattle (2009) and Roddick (2007). The characteristics are then separated into primary and secondary characteristics. Of the primary characteristics; which are suggested to be awareness, responsibility and participation, all 10 students who took part in this research showed examples of each of these characteristics. Two of the 10 students are already raising awareness for global issues, the 5 education students are taking what they learned and will be sharing with their peers and future students. This ‘participation’ is a prime example of sharing the knowledge gained and acting to change the mindset of others; bringing awareness to global issues through education. According to Roddick (2007) the most important quality of a global citizen is having an open-mind. All 10 participants in this study discussed the importance of an open-mind and most of them contributed their IEL abroad to helping them become more open-minded. This realization by the students is supported in Chapter two when it is discussed how Tarc (2013) suggests that IEL abroad helps participants to expand the capacity to understand others and live with others as global citizens. Having an open-mind is another phrase for “expanding one’s intellectual and moral vision”.

Another interesting aspect of this research was that most of the students talked about how they became more aware of their own culture and how they learned more about themselves through this experience. Shattle (2009) and Green (2012) both discuss this as the “initial step of global citizenship”.

In my role as the exchange coordinator at UPEI, I have the privilege of dealing with the short term academic semester abroad students. These particular students are not required to conduct any form of reflection or journaling while abroad. They are provided with logistical and academic advising prior to departure and once they arrive, they are supported remotely by our office if need be. Most of the time, we do not hear from them and this usually indicates all is well. Our IRO will conduct a re-entry session as a debriefing once each student is back to UPEI.

The education students, on the other hand, are asked to reflect and answer specific questions to probe their thinking, allowing them the deepest understanding of their experience. After this research, I believe that when speaking of developing global citizens, the most important aspect of an IEL opportunity is the reflection piece. The students should all be required to reflect or journal during their time abroad as it allows each student to think about the culture they are experiencing and how it may or may not be similar to their own.

Conclusion and Recommendations

International Experiential Learning, whether as a mandatory part of a program or a voluntary opportunity can be a life altering experience during an undergraduate degree. While students are not required to take part in IEL, they are highly encouraged to do so as a way of learning about themselves, their culture and establishing the global citizenship characteristics essential for our increasingly internationalized age.

UPEI's Bilateral Exchange program is only one avenue for students to take advantage of IEL. Most of the programs at UPEI have some form of IEL available to students. The International Specialization stream of the Bachelor of Education program seems to be taking the largest strides at UPEI in terms of number of students taking part.

This thesis set out to determine whether International Experiential Learning leads to the development of Global Citizenship characteristics. The sub questions to be addressed were: (a) What is global citizenship? (b) What is international experiential learning (IEL)? (c) What does global citizenship mean for participants? (d) What changes happened to participants during the international experiential learning (IEL) process? and (e) What practices and strategies adopted by the international experiential learning programs effectively facilitate students' development as global citizens? The findings have clearly indicated that all 10 participants developed some variation of global citizenship characteristics. Whether they became more open-minded and self aware, whether they joined an internationally driven organization that sets out to help others around the world, or whether they took their experiences back to share with others; they all showed some development as global citizens. However, the students do need to be better prepared for understanding what it means to be a global citizen. The future objectives are to incorporate reflection into IEL where it is not already a mandatory part of the process; to increase the number of students taking part in IEL at UPEI; to increase the options of IEL placements for all students; and to develop a global citizenship course to help students a deeper understanding of the characteristics involved in becoming a global citizen.

Recommendation #1 – Mandatory Reflection

Tailor the Bilateral Exchange Program to have more of a purpose associated with the experience. The majority of students who take part in the IEL programs at UPEI are not required

to reflect on their experiences and therefore, both students and program administrators have no way of knowing what they are taking away from this experience. Making guided and sustained review and reflection a part of the process would be an ideal way to help them make the most out of their time abroad. Students are generally left to “do their own thing” while on exchange, but if they were asked to blog, journal or answer some guided reflective questions as part of the program they would be more apt to have a deeper experience. The Bachelor of Education students are required to do this during their practicum placements. A variation of the BEd reflection questions should be adapted by the International Relations Office.

Recommendation #2 – Mandatory Global Citizenship Course

Incorporate a mandatory first year course, similar to the Educating for Global Citizenship course taught by the Faculty of Education, and have this available for all UPEI students. Of the 10 students who took part in this research, only 3 had a solid understanding of what it meant to be a global citizen. These 3 students were the only 3 students who took the Educating for Global Citizenship course.

Recommendation #3 – More Partnerships

More partnerships must be developed to allow more students the opportunity to take part in an IEL. For the exchange students; areas of Europe are important, especially for students in the Arts faculty. The Bachelor of Education students also require more opportunities in countries where political unrest is not a threat.

Recommendation #4 – Build IEL into Programs

Make it mandatory for all students to do some form of IEL before graduation. All 10 participants who took part in this study said they would definitely recommend IEL to their peers.

In the years that I have been working with the exchange program, I have never had one student come back and say they should not have gone. This will also help to bust any myths that taking part in an IEL will add extra time for students to complete their degree. If they know from the moment they start their program that they must conduct an IEL, they can plan appropriately.

Recommendation #5 – Funding Support

Establish funding sources to help offset the cost to students taking part in IEL. One way would be to approach advancement to discuss finding an external donor to help support the financial aspect of IEL. Another way would be to apply for other funding sources as they become available, such as any government funded programs or project that may present themselves. Some students in the study found it important to have the support while others were able to take part without.

Recommendation #6 – A Global Citizenship Certificate of Recognition

Develop a certificate based on a student's learning achievements in an international context. The certificate could be achieved with an appropriate number of combined essential activities, such as second language acquisition, an international experience, involvement in the Buddy program, internationally focused research projects and/or a definitive number of internationally focussed courses.

Reflection on My Research Journey

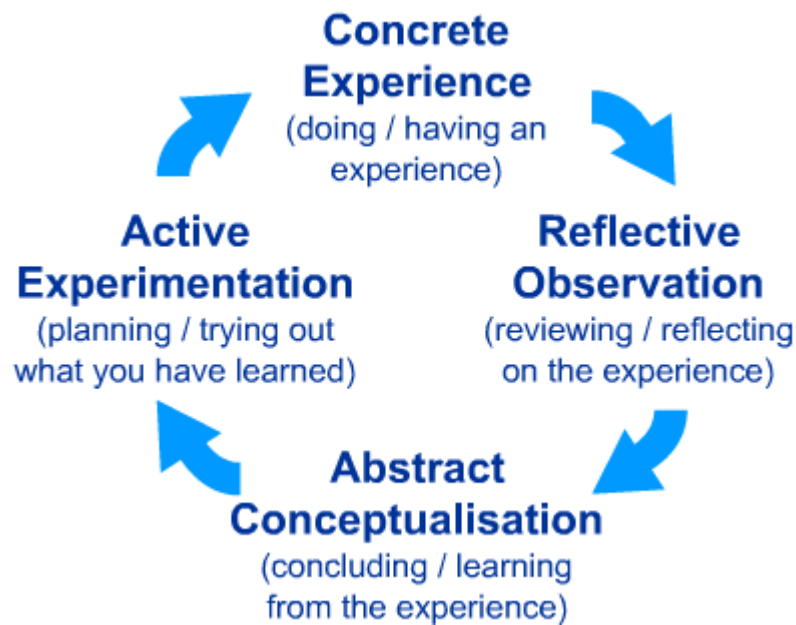
One challenge of this research was ensuring the thematic findings were true and faithful representations of what the participants actually experienced during their IEL abroad. In order to validate the interpretations, I conducted member checking with three of the ten students in an informal setting. The three students agreed that my findings were an accurate conclusion of their

experiences and therefore, this allowed me to feel very confident that the information I provided was accurate and reliable.

Based on the Kolb Cycle (see Figure 4), as outlined in Chapter 2, my research journey began with the in-depth research I conducted with the 10 participants; the Concrete Experience. This was my first experience at participant focused qualitative research and as each phase of the research took place, I continued to learn new things. For example, as each focus group was over and the data was transcribed I realized areas I could have probed more for deeper responses. In reflecting upon this experience, or during the Reflective Observation phase of this research, I concluded that there is nothing I would change in terms of the research process. I am extremely pleased with the end result of my first attempt at graduate research. While conceptualizing the experience, otherwise known as the Abstract Conceptualization stage, I realize it allowed me to have a better understanding of theory and practice and how the two work together. I initially assumed theory to be the foundation of practice but have since come to understand theory as it evolves from practice, or informs practice. Prior to conducting this research I questioned which came first.

The final stage of my research journey is the Active Experimentation, which will be an ongoing process. I will take my recommendations that I have the ability to incorporate and implement them into the exchange process for September 2014 or January 2015 at the latest. With regard to the program specific recommendations; these will need to be approved by senior administration and will take more time for implementation if they are agreed to. This research may also be used as a starting point for future research in different areas of IEL, which is discussed in more detail below.

FIGURE 4



This entire research process from start to finish incorporated many learning curves. As the primary researcher, I feel the most important thing I learned is that international education and global citizenship have many aspects and helping students develop the characteristics of global citizenship is an ongoing task. Students do not develop the characteristics over night or in one IEL opportunity. This is an ongoing task that we, as international educators, must promote, support and nurture.

Suggestions for Future Research

It would be extremely interesting to design a research project to have a look at the employment of students across Canada who took part in IEL while completing their undergraduate degree. This could also be done in a comparative case study with another country, such as the USA and/or Australia. According to a CBIE survey (CBIE, 2012) survey,

91% of employers said that they value job candidates with international experience and 50% said that, all else being equal, they would hire a candidate with study abroad experience over one without. This would be an interesting avenue to follow up on.

Another interesting proposal for further research would be to look at whether or not a student's IEL opportunity changed their career path. I have been told by past participants that going abroad changed their life, but I would like to know how.

The theorists referred to in this research were not used to guide my data analysis but rather, they were used as a guide for my data collection. My data analysis was guided by my research questions. There is no clear theory or single theoretical framework that supports both International Experiential Learning and Global Citizenship Characteristics at the same time. This may be a framework I could consider generating in the future using this research as a starting point.

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Appendix A: Ethics Approval



550 University Avenue
Charlottetown
Prince Edward Island
Canada C1A 4P3

December 3, 2012

Sherilyn Acorn-LeClair

Re: REB Ref # 6005146

"Developing global citizenship in higher education through international experiential learning: an interpretive case study."

The above mentioned research proposal has now been reviewed under the expedited review track by the UPEI Research Ethics Board. I am pleased to inform you that the proposal has received ethics approval. Please be advised that the Research Ethics Board currently operates according to the *Tri-Council Policy Statement 2: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and applicable laws and regulations.

The approval for the study as presented is valid for one year. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Ethics Renewal form is forwarded to Research Services prior to the renewal date. The information provided in this form must be current to the time of submission and submitted to Research Services not less than 30 days of the anniversary of your approval date. The Ethics Renewal form can be downloaded from the Research Services website (http://www.upei.ca/research/reb_forms).

Any proposed changes to the study must also be submitted on the same form to the UPEI Research Ethics Board for approval.

The Research Ethics Board advises that **IF YOU DO NOT** return the completed Ethics Renewal form prior to the date of renewal:

- Your ethics approval will lapse
- You will be required to stop research activity immediately
- You will not be permitted to restart the study until you reapply for and receive approval to undertake the study again.

Lapse in ethics approval may result in interruption or termination of funding.

Notwithstanding the approval of the REB, the primary responsibility for the ethical conduct of the investigation remains with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Murray", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Malcolm Murray, Ph.D.
Chair, UPEI Research Ethics Board

Appendix B: Information Letter

Dear International Academic Exchange (IAE) students and Specialization in International Education (SIE) students:

My name is Sherilyn Acorn-LeClair and I work within the International Relations Office here at UPEI. I am also a Master of Education student and as part of my thesis research, I am here to invite you to participate in my research. The title of my thesis is “Developing Global Citizenship in Higher Education through International Experiential Learning: An Interpretive Case Study.”

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you would like to participate, I am providing you with two consent forms and a demographic survey. Please sign both consent forms and complete the demographic survey (approximately 15 minutes). Once you are finished, please place demographic survey and one signed consent form in the envelope provided. Five participants will be selected and asked to take part in a focus group interview session. This session will be facilitated by me, here at UPEI and will take approximately one hour. During your time abroad, you will be asked to complete four reflective questions. For International Academic Exchange students, this will mean one question per month (over four months) and for Specialization in International Education students, this will mean one per week (for the first four weeks). These questions will be provided and answered via Moodle. After your time abroad there will be a second focus group interview session that you will be asked to take part in for approximately one hour.

I am now going to give everyone two copies of the Research Invitation and Consent Form, one copy of the demographic survey and an envelope. I shall then leave the room. Please read the consent form carefully. If you decided to take part in this study, please complete all the items on the second page of the consent form and then sign and date the form. Please also complete the demographic survey. Once complete, please put one signed consent form and the demographic survey in the envelope. Keep the second signed consent form for your records. For SIE students, these will be collected by your professor. For IAE students, please leave the envelope with Erin Clarke at the front desk.

If you decide not to participate in the study, do not sign the forms or complete the demographic survey. Simply place the blank forms in the envelope. For SIE students, these will be collected by your professor. For IAE students, please leave the envelope with Erin Clarke at the front desk.

When all the envelopes are collected, I will pick them up from your professor or Ms. Clarke. Once all envelopes are in my possession, I will select a total of ten students to participate (five IAE and five SIE) who will then be contacted by me via email to set up the first focus group meeting.

Thank you!

Appendix C: Invitation and Consent Form



University of Prince Edward Island

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH INVITATION AND CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You have been invited to participate in a thesis research project entitled ***Developing Global Citizenship in Higher Education through International Experiential Learning: An Interpretive Case Study***. Please read this form carefully, and feel free to ask questions you might have.

Investigator: Sherilyn Acorn-LeClair, Master of Education – Leadership in Learning student,
University of Prince Edward Island: 902-894-2837 sdacorn@upei.ca

Purpose and Objective of the Study: The purpose of this study is to explore and understand how international experiential learning (IEL) opportunities or education abroad (EA) opportunities at the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) contribute to the development of global citizens at UPEI.

What will I be asked to do? Ten participants will be involved in this study. The research will primarily take place at UPEI. While you are abroad, you will also be asked to complete some reflection questions. Each participant will be asked to complete a demographic survey consisting of demographic questions (15 minutes) and take part in a focus group (60 minutes) for a total of approximately one hour and fifteen minutes. During your time abroad, depending on your program, you will be asked to one reflection question per month (for academic exchange students - four to five questions) or complete one reflection question per week (for specialization in international education students - four to five questions). Each question should take approximately 30 minutes to complete for a total of two to two and a half hours. Upon return, you will be asked to participate in another focus group interview for one hour. The total time of your participation in this research will be 250 – 285 minutes.

What type of information will be collected? This research will collect your insight and perspective regarding your international experience and how it may or may not contribute to the development of global citizenship.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this research is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or you may withdraw from the research at any time without any repercussions.

Are There Risks or Benefits If I Participate? There are no risks in participating. The benefit of participation will be a better understanding of your IEL and how it has played a role in your global citizenship development.

Confidentiality: If you wish to remain anonymous, a pseudonym will be used.

What happens to the information I provide? Participant will be provided with the transcripts of the interviews to review prior to a final draft being established. The information you provide will be kept on hand for one year in order to develop the thesis. Once the thesis is complete the information will be deleted and shredded. Participants will be provided with the summary and/or findings section of the thesis and will be invited to attend the thesis defence.

Consent to Participate: There are several options for you to consider if you decide to take part in this research. You can choose all, some or none of them. Please put a check mark on the corresponding line(s) that grants me your permission to:

I agree to participate in this project:	Yes: ____ No: ____
I grant permission to be audio taped:	Yes: ____ No: ____
I grant permission to be quoted:	Yes: ____ No: ____

Questions/concerns: If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research project and/or your participation, please contact:

Sherilyn Acorn-LeClair, International Relations Office, Robertson Building – Room 218, 902-894-2837, sdacorn@upei.ca

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this study, please contact:

UPEI Research Ethics Board at (902)620-5104, or by email at reb@upei.ca.

Signature: Your signature on this form indicates that you 1) understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research project, and 2) agree to participate as a research subject.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. You will keep a signed and dated copy of this form. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Research Participant

Name (print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Researcher

Name (print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix D: Demographic Survey

1. Gender: a) Female b) Male
2. Age: a) 20 - 25 b) 26-30 c) 31-35 d) 36 and over
3. Ethnicity: a) Caucasian b) Minority (Please specify_____)
4. Were you born in Prince Edward Island?
 a) Yes b) No
5. What is your year of study? _____
6. What was your major? _____
7. What language(s) do you speak? (Please specify) _____
8. Do you consider yourself a Global Citizen?
 a) Yes b) No
9. Have you had any previous international experience(s)?
 a) Yes b) No
10. If your answer to question 9 was "YES", please describe the international experience(s).

Location	Type of experience	Duration

11. Do you feel you are prepared for this international learning opportunity?

 a) Yes b) No
12. If yes, please select how you are prepared (one or more application choices)
 a) Course work
 b) Information sessions
 c) Family/friends
 d) Program advisor/faculty/staff
 e) Other _____

Thank you!!

Appendix E: Focus –group interview questions

1. Why did you participate in international experiential learning?
2. What is the impact of international experiential learning on your life, career, and identity?
3. What does global citizenship mean to you? (probe: definition, knowledge, skills, attributes, actions, etc)
4. Do you consider yourself a global citizen? Why/Why Not? (probe: examination of identity as a global citizen)
5. What is the impact of international experience on your development as a global citizen? (Probe: understanding of world system and global issues, intercultural skills, development of multiple perspectives, increased engagement in promoting social justice etc).
6. Do you consider the development of global citizenship an important learning outcome of the international experience? Why or why not?
7. Which part of the international learning experience mostly significantly contributed to helping you become a global citizen?
8. What changes would you recommend to make international programs more successful in developing global citizens?
9. Would you recommend other students to take part in the international experiential learning? Why or why not?
10. What, if anything, would you have changed about your international experience?

Appendix F: Guided Questions for Reflection While Abroad

Week/Month 1:

Describe the feelings you had when you first arrived in your host country and host institution.

Week/Month 2:

Describe how relationships are similar or different from the way they are in Canada (ie: teacher to student, student to student etc).

Week/Month 3:

Describe how your cross-cultural understandings have evolved during your time abroad.

Week/Month 4:

Describe how your international experience has influenced your understanding about yourself and how you view the world.